scovering Alaska with Harding—By Joe Mitchell Chapple
McCLURE'S
Magazine
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October
1923
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Volume 55 Number 8

McCLURE'S MAGAZINE

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GEORGE WASHINGTON, it is related, threw a silver dollar across the Potomac River. At the spot where the feat is said to have been performed, the stream is approximately a mile in width. But admittedly, a dollar went farther then, than now.

You can make your dollar go farther than it otherwise would by reading the advertisements.

Guided by advertising, you buy merchandise of established reputation. If it's clothing you know how well it should wear and what the style should be. If it's a musical instrument, you know what to expect in tone and workmanship. If it's a vacuum cleaner, you know what kind of service it should give.

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Make every dollar travel far
Read the advertisements

Whose fault when children disobey? People judge you by the behavior of your children. If your child ever did this what would you do?

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THERE is nothing more embarrassing, nothing more humiliating, than a naughty child. Every mother knows that people judge her by the behavior of her children—that parents with unruly youngsters are seldom popular, seldom asked to go to places.

How do you act when your child openly disobeys in front of visitors? Do you flush and murmur apologies? Do you punish the child then and there? Or do you pretend not to notice the incident and attempt to "cover it up?"

Unnecessary Humiliation

A disobedient child is a constant source of trouble and humiliation. Yet all this worry, all this embarrassment, is now unnecessary.

Now you need no longer worry about the behavior of your children. No matter how lively they may be, no matter how mischievous, you can easily give them a simple training which will make them courteous, truthful and obedient — a source of pride and joy, instead of embarrassment and humiliation. No longer need you be constantly worried when visitors call, for fear your child will "act up" or misbehave. With a wonderful new method of home training you can have perfect confidence that your child will behave without constant supervision, constant watching.

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This entirely new and different method of child training has been evolved by Professor Ray C. Beery, A.B., M.A. (Harvard and Columbia). After years of scientific research and practical experience in child training, Professor Beery has formed the Parents' Association to aid parents in the proper training of their children. Today the Parents' Association is bringing a great constructive help to 30,000 members in training children to have sturdy health of body, fineness of mind, and nobility of character.

This great movement will bring you the help you so badly need. It will show you how to win the child's complete confidence—how to make him all that you have ever wished him to be—whether he is still in the cradle or is eighteen years old.

How do you act when your child openly disobeys in front of visitors? Should this child be punished?

A disobedient child is a constant source of trouble and humiliation

When your child "acts up, do you conquer or does he

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It tells you how to correct mistakes of early training—how to suppress temper in children without punishment—how to discourage the "why" habit in regard to commands.

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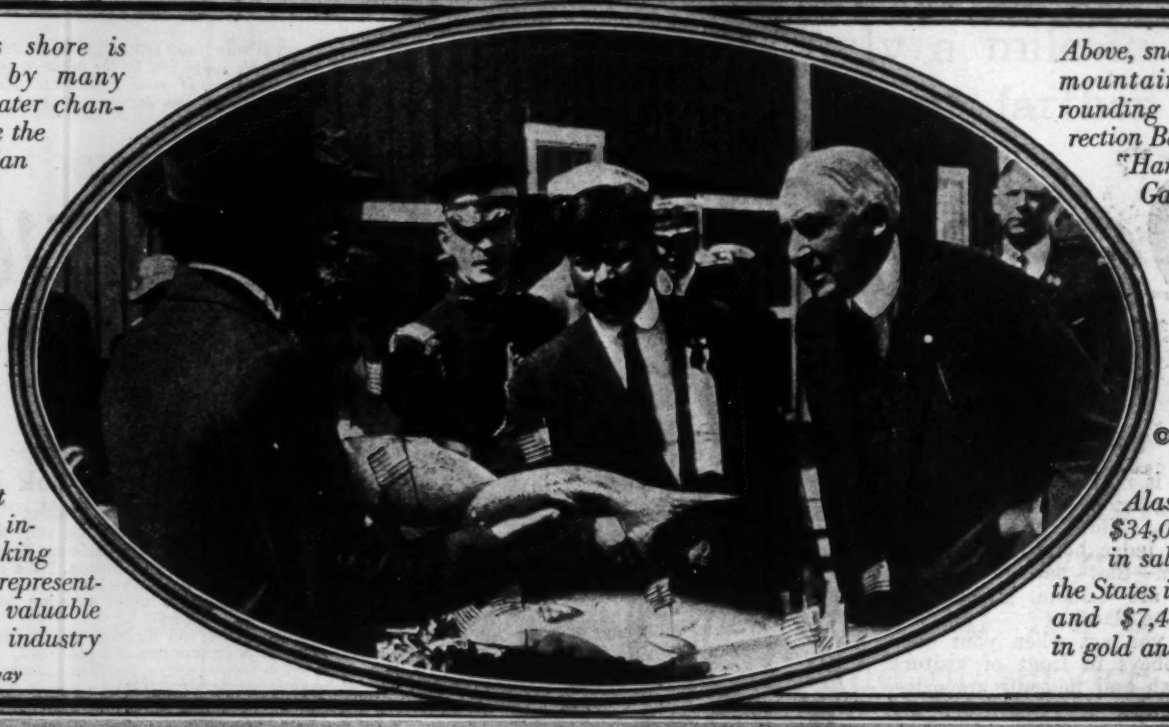
Alaska's shore is broken by many deep-water channels, like the Norwegian fjords

Above, snow-clad mountains surrounding Resurrection Bay, now "Harding Gateway"



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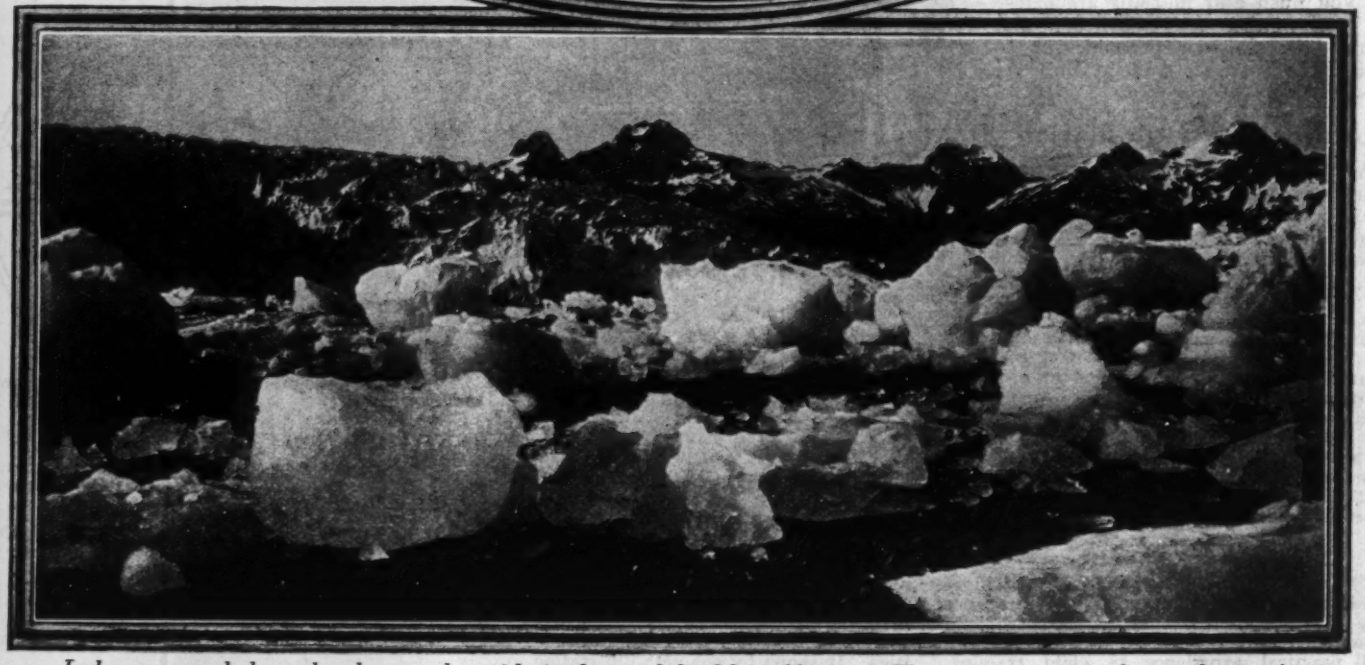
President Harding inspects a king salmon, representing a valuable Alaskan industry

© Galloway

Alaska sent $34,000,000 in salmon to the States in 1920 and $7,413,000 in gold and silver



Icebergs stranded on the shore at low tide in front of the Muir Glacier. There are some 200 large glaciers in Alaska that have been given names, and countless thousands of smaller ones

VOLUME 55
No. 8

McCLURE'S MAGAZINE
S. S. McCLURE, *Editor*
KENNETH W. PAYNE, *Managing Editor*

OCTOBER
1923

Discovering Alaska with President Harding

The Inside Story of an Epoch-Making Trip to Wonderland

By Joe Mitchell Chapple

The Late President's Biographer, Commissioned by McClure's to Report the Alaska Journey

"ONLY four more speeches to write! Now for a glorious holiday!"

There was a radiant, carefree smile on the face of President Warren G. Harding as he ascended the gangway of the historic transport *Henderson*, destined to carry to the yet mysterious shores of Alaska the first President of the United States who ever visited our northern wonderland. Ever since his trip to Panama, in 1920, President Harding had dreamed of a voyage of discovery to the farthest-flung frontiers of the Republic.

Emblem of his dream come true, the President's blue, four-starred flag—with the great seal of the United States emblazoned upon it—was flying at the *Henderson's* masthead; the grim gray sides of this naval transport, the largest ship that ever sailed Alaskan waters, reminded us of her heroic service in the war zone, when she carried soldiers of the A. E. F. to France. She was one of the first to take our troops overseas, and once, in flames, she was abandoned at sea. Now, for a few weeks, the *Henderson* was to be virtually the White House afloat—and from the start there were those of us aboard who recalled the wartime misadventure and felt her a ship of ill omen.

Yet profound was the thrill we felt in thus setting forth on a voyage of twentieth-century exploration, to discover the Alaska of today through the eyes of the nation's chief executive. The trip was to mark an epoch; to bring about an awakening of the people of the United States to the scenic beauties and inspiring future of this sub-arctic empire of ours that has been for years exploited, neglected, misrepresented, or veiled in a glamour of romantic unreality hanging over from gold-rush days and perpetuated in the films and best-selling thrillers.

In the soft rain of that July afternoon, throngs gathered on the great community wharf at Tacoma to cheer and wave farewell. There were misty eyes among them; it is hard to conceive just what it would have meant to those assembled had they known that this indeed was their last farewell to their President. The leave-taking was very simple; hands were waved and the *Henderson* backed out. In a few moments she was plying her way down Puget Sound, as the roar of twenty-one guns, the Presidential salute, resounded from shore to shore. Two destroyers, steaming slowly, convoyed us fore and aft—like watchdogs held in leash.

"Where is the President's stateroom?" somebody inquired. Attention turned to the large cabin aft on the upper deck. Screens enclosed the deck to combat the Alaskan mosquito, of whose viciousness we had heard much. Along the upper promenade the bower of flowers literally formed an avenue of blossoms of every hue and color.

THE Navy Band on board began their afternoon concert. "Yes, We Have No Bananas" pushed its way into the program. "I-o-wa, I-o-wa, That's Where the Tall Corn Grows!" was the concluding number. Over and over it was repeated, until Secretary Wallace, "The gentleman from Iowa," was accused of having bribed the bandmaster.

With his new seagoing cap properly adjusted "to protect the dome," as he said, Speaker Gillette sidled down the rail to settle a point of order.

"Shall I wear high or low shoes on deck in daylight?" he queried anxiously.

Acquaintances ripened quickly; formalities were thrown overboard. The President held informal open-air Cabinet meetings by the rail amidships, where the

Glimpses of the Journey

AT right, the first Presidential flag raising on Alaskan soil; Harding raises Old Glory at Metlakatla. In circle below, mists rising over the "dead" glacier in Taku inlet. Large picture below, President and Mrs. Harding with Governor Scott C. Bone of Alaska in his Eskimo fur parka. Oval insert, a glimpse of the famous 1000-mile Inside Passage to Alaska

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President Harding on the deck of the "Henderson" as the ship entered Alaskan waters

JOE MITCHELL CHAPPLE, compiler of the famous book "Heart-throbs," a personal friend of President and Mrs. Harding, and author of a biography of President Harding upon which he was in close collaboration with the latter up to the day of his death, was commissioned by McClure's Magazine to accompany the Presidential party to Alaska. He writes here a classic story of the journey

© U. & U.

Joe Mitchell Chapple, Harding's biographer; above a totem pole of southeastern Alaska

Cabinet trio, Secretaries Work, Hoover and Wallace foregathered. Secretary Hoover later snuggled into a big chair on deck behind a huge cigar and was soon absorbed in data about Alaska fisheries—his own particular province.

TYPEWRITERS began to click in the staterooms; the newspaper artillery was beginning to throw up a barrage and to open rapid fire with the slightest bits of deck gossip as munitions. Secretary Hubert Work kept his assistant, Donald, busy furnishing Interior Department data. Doctor Work was the government railroad magnate—in charge of five hundred miles of Alaskan railway—to say nothing of sixteen other bureaus.

Colonel Greeley, Chief of the Forest Bureau, discussed the overripe forests with Secretary Wallace. "There are over two hundred million acres of national forest reserves in Alaska—a wooded wonderland, unparalleled," said Colonel Greeley. And he added: "Many water-power sources are located conveniently for paper-mill projects."

Thus early were we introduced to Alaska in her true rôle—a great national storehouse, holding vast, untouched reservoirs of natural wealth, with timber, fish, fur and precious metals as the Big Four among her manifold products.

Five cabinet officers and twenty-eight bureaus exercise authority in Alaska—and Alaska still lives! The local government is represented by four Judicial districts, electing to the legislature in Juneau four senators and sixteen representatives. The U. S. Judge, U. S. Marshall, and U. S. Attorney are Uncle Sam's local triumvirate, with Governor Scott Bone at the head. The great problem discussed by officials on board was how to coördinate and consolidate under some one central authority the now weirdly subdivided administration of the territory.

The scarcity of authentic books and accurate descriptive literature on the Alaska of today was revealed when we began to borrow each other's books. The romantic novels and adventure stories deal with a fictional side of Alaska which has passed, as has our own wild West. And herein lies the vital importance of President Harding's Alaskan trip.

As the President laid aside the book he was reading on deck one day, he remarked: "What we want, boys, is to understand the actual situation in Alaska now. Keep your eyes and ears open, get acquainted with the people, and tell the folks back home what the real Alaska of today is like."

OFFICIAL information was available, but the popular books read on this voyage were those of Jack London and Rex Beach; some indulged in Robert Service's poems and in John Muir's classic. The book which was borrowed most of all was my copy of Frank Carpenter's "Alaska." One copy of Bancroft's history was found and one of Vitus Bering's Log, revealing the romance of the days of early explorers.

The discoverer of Alaska, Vitus Bering, was Danish-born. He is said to have been buried on some unknown island in the Pacific. Under the dying command of Peter the Great, he set sail to discover the Northwest Passage, in 1741. With such other names as those of

Captain Cook, of England; Baranoff, of Russia; Fidalgo, of Spain; Melaspina, of France; Captain Cox, of Sweden; Waxel, of Holland, and Captain Cleveland of the U. S. A., all associated with early discoveries there, Alaska's history is a composite of explorers' dreams such as no other spot on earth can claim. This explains the cosmopolite character of the names now found on the map of Alaska.

SAILING nearly a thousand miles to the northward—as far as from New York to Chicago—through British waters, the stately *Henderson* cast her shadows on both shores of the longest inland salt water "river-sea" on earth. That famous inland passage was like a myriad of Hudsons and St. Lawrences rolled into one. From each deserted, silent coast of the narrow channel rose numberless mountains; snow-capped Rockies on the right and the heavily-timbered primeval forests of fir on the islands to the left. It was a scene of the Thousand Islands, multiplied in endless, almost monotonous panorama, day by day. Only a little inlet fishing village or a lumber camp marked human habitation—and these were hundreds of miles apart.

Thus the days on shipboard lengthened into vistas of scenic splendor, with only the eddying tides to ruffle the serenity of our pilot, as he sought a way to swing the big

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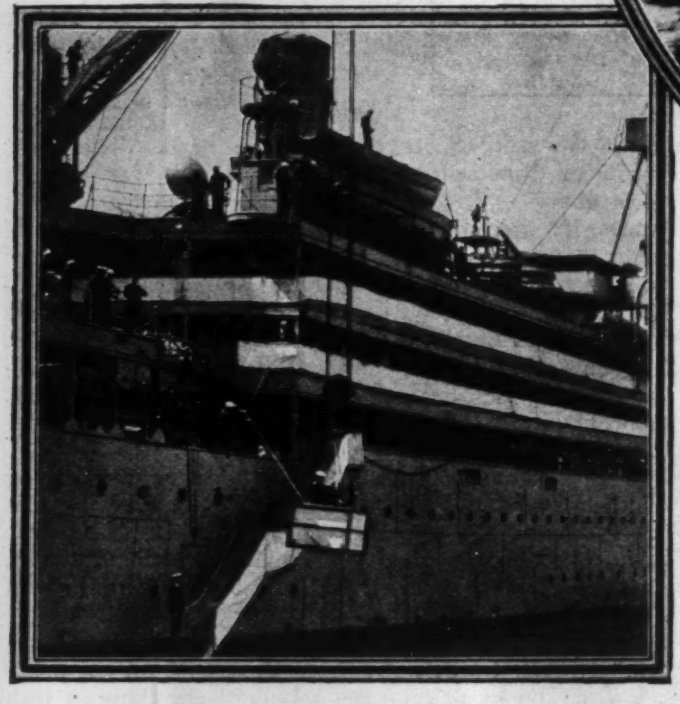

vessel around the sharp bends. The icy waters of these deep channels could tell many weird tales of wrecks on the reefs or in blinding fog and sleet. It was here that the *Princess Sophia* was lost in 1917, with two hundred souls.

Late on the fourth evening we came out to view our first Alaskan sunset. It was nearly ten o'clock. Alaskan waters had been reached at last and we were to anchor, provided we could find bottom. The sailor heaving the lead shouted:

"Twenty fathoms and no bottom!"

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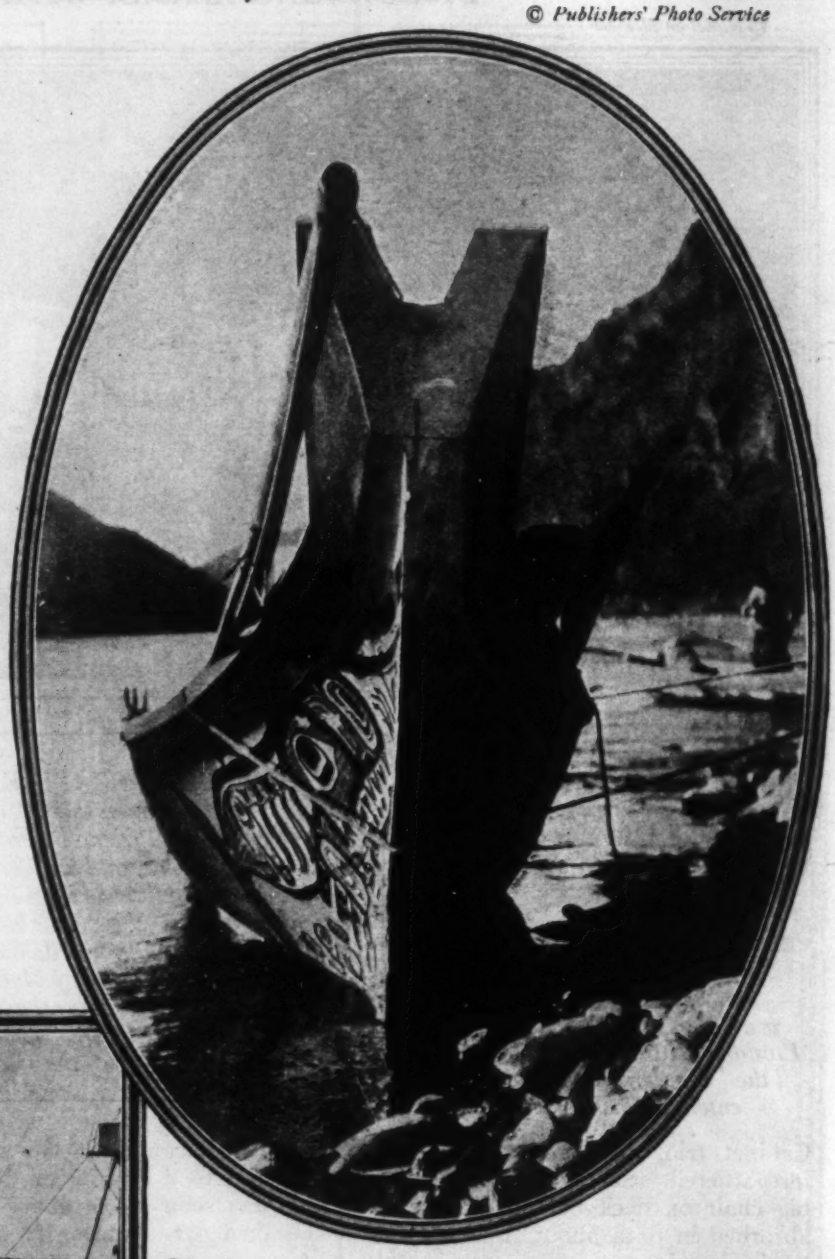

Warships of two races and ages meet in Alaskan waters. Above, gaily painted war canoe of the Thlinkit natives; at left, the U. S. S. "Henderson," largest ship that ever sailed to Alaska, showing the improvised elevator by which Mrs. Harding was taken aboard

But a few feet farther on anchorage was secured. The President and Mrs. Harding joined us on deck. The sun appeared to be rent asunder by fleecy white clouds, circling like an upturned bowl of fire with a tiny rim at the top. The reflection shimmered on the water—the face of the sun was encircled with a glowing border of deep purple.

Looking upon that fiery picture, painted in celestial colors, the President murmured, "Wonderful!" It was the word he used again and again on the trip to express emotions awakened by the scenic splendor of a land where every superlative seems weak.

The tide swung the bow of the ship to the west. The silence of our sunset worship was broken by Mrs. Harding's favorite refrain, "The End of a Perfect Day." Two figures stood side by side, silhouetted on the upper deck against the gold-and-purple blaze. They were the President and the First Lady of the Land, gazing through the portals of the twilight upon their first vista of Alaskan shores.

Next day we were awakened by the shrill whistle of a tugboat on which an Indian Band was playing the "Star

© J. Harley Stamp

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Above, a beauty of the Aleutian Islands. Alaskan natives are of three chief types—Mongolian Indians of the Pacific coast, Mongolian Aleuts of the islands, and North American Redmen in the interior. At right, farm site along the route of the Alaskan railroad

Spangled Banner," as the reception committee from the town of Metlakatla came out to meet us.

In the glory of this sunny Sunday morning the Presidential party was met by Governor Scott Bone. The landing was made in launches, and here, for the first time in history, a President of the United States set foot on the soil of Alaska. The little village of Metlakatla, of some five hundred native-born Alaskan Indians, nestled in a verdure of grass and foliage. It was the community town of the Island of Annette, about the size of Staten Island, given by a special act of Congress to these Indians through the influence of Henry Ward Beecher and Phillips Brooks to provide a haven for Father Duncan and his Tsimshian Indian converts. The twin Westminster-like towers of Father Duncan's church on the hill—the largest edifice devoted to religious worship in Alaska—loomed up, a landmark of missionary achievement.

A HUNDRED houses, some of them deserted, told the story of former days. On the wharf, the party was met by a throng of little Indian children who led the way to the schoolhouse, under an arch on which they had inscribed "God Bless Our President." An assembly comprising almost every living person on the Island of Annette gathered to greet the President on the schoolhouse lawn. A choir sang the Hallelujah Chorus from the "Messiah," and an open forum followed, in which the members of the Cabinet participated.

The board sidewalks of the town of Metlakatla were raised on stilts, high above the mossy ground and the luxuriant undergrowth, which was almost of a tropical nature. Skunk cabbages and larkspur, bleeding hearts and fireweed, all grew in wild profusion. Daisies starred the grass everywhere. Gardens of potatoes were in blossom; peas and lettuce and other vegetables were to be found in abundance. Prepared though we had been, we were amazed at the fertility of Alaska's soil, where vegetation works overtime in an almost everlasting summer day. Here there are heavy rainfalls and hot sunshine to work miracles in gardening.

Just before leaving Metlakatla, the President raised the stars and stripes on the flagpole. He was repeating the ceremony of 1867 at Sitka, when Alaska became American soil. On the wharf a huge king salmon, four feet long, gayly decorated, was presented to President Harding, representing the most important of Alaska's industries. The President smiled knowingly as he turned to Secretary Hoover, whose brow was already wrinkled with contemplation of fishery problems.

Alaska covers an area equal to that of all the empire states of the Mississippi Valley. One-fifth of the land of the United States represents the territory lying within the boundaries of Alaska. The sum of 7,200,000 dollars, with which it was purchased fifty-six years ago, has already yielded over a billion and a quarter in products. Every year the original cost of Alaska has been taken from its waters and its soil.

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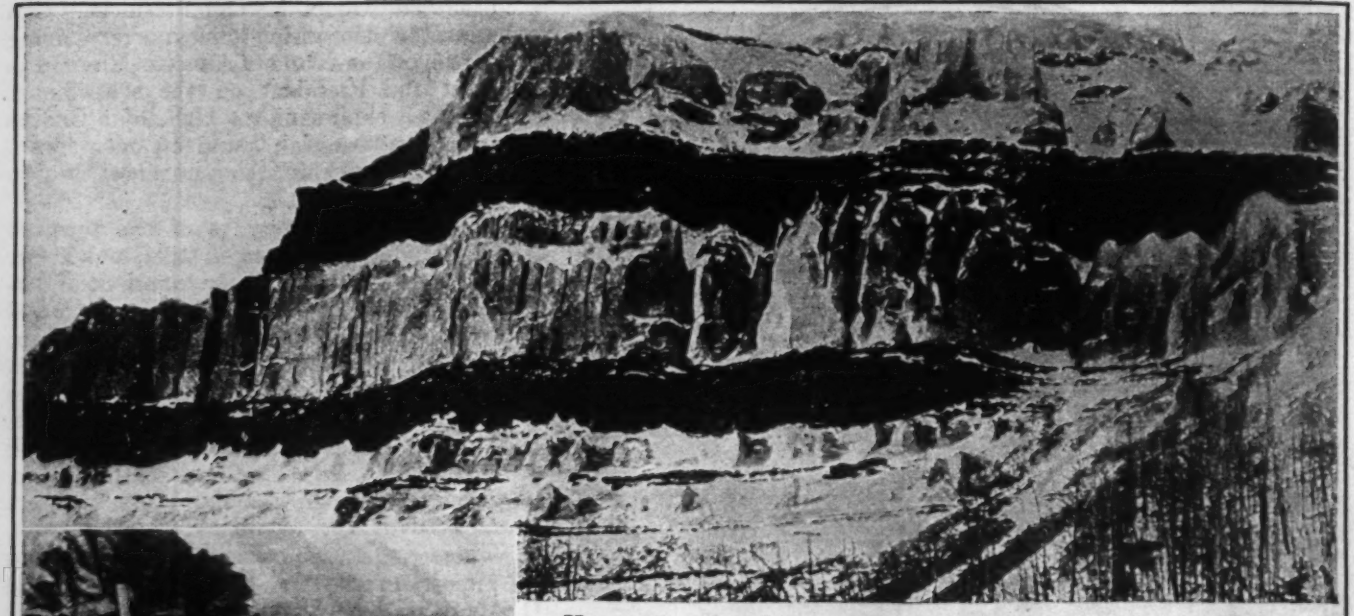
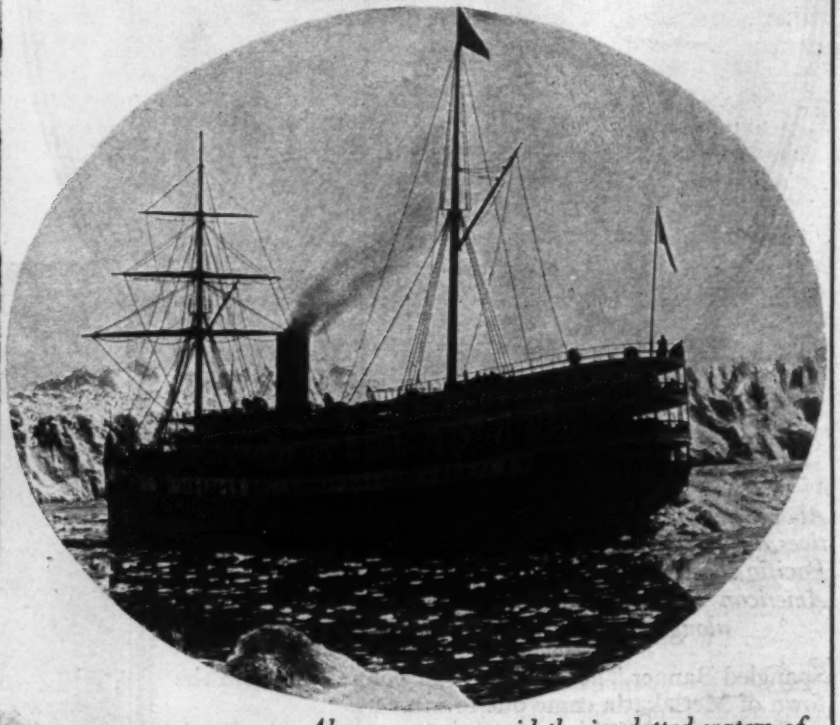


Huge veins of coal cropping out of the mountainside near Nenana

© Brown Bros.

Rhubarb grows to monster size in fertile soil near Skagway



Above, a scene amid the ice-dotted waters of Glacier Bay. At left, Alaskan gold mining with a great stream of water cutting into a hillside. The pictures on this page represent four of the outstanding natural endowments of Alaska—immense coal resources; astonishing agricultural possibilities; scenic wonders; and vast mineral wealth

© Publishers' Photo Service

Winter freighting over the Broad Pass near present route of Alaskan railroad

And, strange though it may seem, not gold, but the fisheries today make up more of this total than all the other products combined.

All this from a territory with a population, in 1920, of fifty-five thousand—one-half white, with twenty-five thousand Indians and Eskimos and five hundred Chinese and Japanese! There are more people in any one of the cities of Kalamazoo, Kankakee, Kenosha—and almost as many in Oshkosh—as in Alaska's entire area of three hundred and seventy-eight million acres.

We looked in vain for crowds. It was no wonder there were no great throngs, for there are as many people working in the Equitable Building in New York as there are white people in all Alaska. And yet these few individuals represent a productive power of astonishing figures—aggregating millions of dollars annually.

CROSSING the inlet channel amid myriads of uninhabited, forest-covered islands, we landed a few hours later at Ketchikan, the first port of call in Alaska. It is located above "The Portland Canal," close to the Canadian border. Ketchikan was a busy port in Klondike days when the city was like one great wharf, roosting high on green, sea-stained pilings, surrounded by mountains rising almost from the water's edge.

You could feel in the throng that welcomed us with songs and cheers the spirit of American enterprise. The houses built far up on the side of the mountains were all decorated with pictures and flags, and the Reception Committee wore silk hats, prepared for a dignified welcome. Then every head was bared and former service men held their snappy salute as the President stood at attention before leaving the ship while the band played the National Anthem. The Ketchikan band on the narrow street responded.

In automobiles, systematically numbered, the party was taken to the Canyon to view the new baseball park and the Waterworks Channel. The red painted canneries representing the largest industry in Ketchikan were inspected. On the tide flats, thirty feet below the pile-supported wooden streets and sidewalks, a game of baseball was in progress on the sandy beach. Hitherto the games have been played there, "tide permitting"; but the sea's tendency to rush in and interrupt proceedings had compelled the building of the new ball park up the canyon.

Here were people from every state in the union—Ketchikan is a cosmopolitan seaport. Nestling on the side of the towering mountains, it was like a picturesque glimpse of Norway.

"Now for business," the President said, as he led a committee of residents to the upper deck of the *Henderson* for a conference. The boat was held an hour while the conference continued. In the meantime some one discovered it was the anniversary of the wedding of President and Mrs. Harding. There was a rush to offer con-

© *Kadel & Herbert*

On the shores of Gastineau Channel lies Juneau, capital city of a territory covering 590,880 square miles and containing a greater variety of natural resources than any other area owned by the United States

Above, Haines, a picturesque town in Southeastern Alaska on the beautiful Inside Passage

©Pacific & Atlantic

gratulations and good wishes. Mrs. Harding held the crowd at bay with cordial conversation while, in Cabinet fashion, the President exchanged ideas with the citizens of Ketchikan, as to what was needed to protect the fishing industries, to establish more direct market and cable communication with the United States, and to build up the pulpwood and paper industry, which had already been started near there in connection with a sawmill and water-power development.

Soon thereafter we were steaming northward again amid the witcheries of Alaskan moonlight, up the inland sea, bound for Wrangell. In the morning boat crews from the destroyers were met by quaint war vessels of another and more ancient kind—the war canoes of the Indians painted in gay, barbaric designs, and manned by natives in equally colorful war blankets. Wrangell is one of the oldest names in the history of Alaska. The town that bears it is over a thousand miles distant from Mt. Wrangell and the Island of Wrangell. Like Ketchikan, it is built on the side of the mountain, with business buildings and streets planted on tall green stilts above the muddy waters of the Stikine River.

The President did not retire early that night and I shall never forget his comments.

"You know I do enjoy meeting these people," he said. "They help me more than I can tell them. They have preserved the sturdy spirit of the pioneer, and without our pioneers and frontiers we are likely to lose the self-reliance and upstanding courage which has made our nation grow."

In a remarkably short time, President Harding had gained a real understanding of and admiration for the people of Alaska.

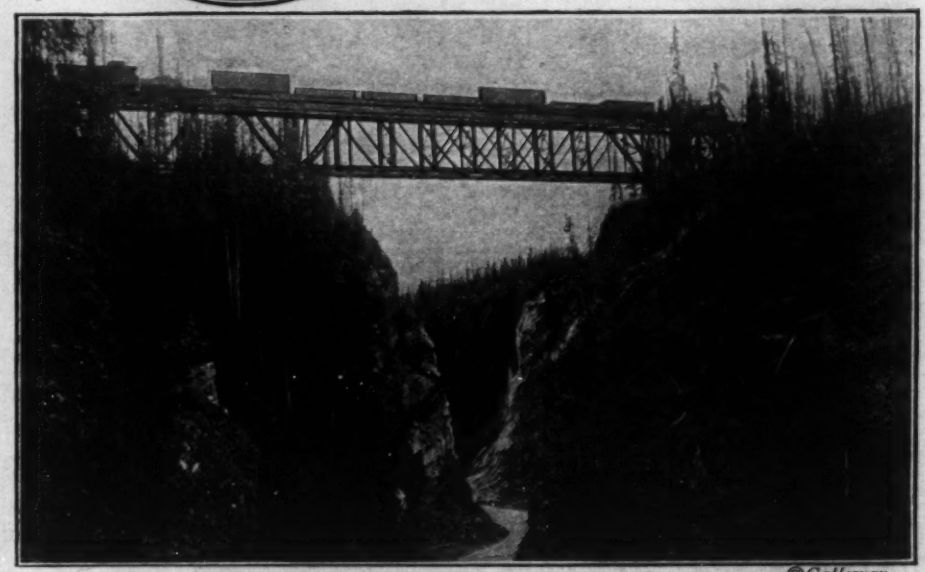
"Can you conceive of anything finer than you see here," he continued meditatively, as he puffed his pipe, "where men rear robust, educated families with the right ideals and make happy homes—where they go ahead and do things without fear or favor? Alaska is going to work out her own problems if I judge these people aright, for, first of all, they have that great heritage of health which means so much."

He sighed as he said these words, and his voice was that of a tired man.

© J. Harley Stamp

Eskimo woman from Alaska's northern shores along the Arctic Ocean, showing Mongolian type of features

AS if pushing her bow into the side of a great mountain, the *Henderson* landed next at Juneau, the capital of Alaska, which, according to the last census, is the metropolis of the territory. It was early in the morning and the throng of cheering Alaskans under umbrellas, perched on the buildings and filling the streets, were celebrating the only rainy day President Harding saw in Alaska. A long line of school children with garlands of fireweed formed the guard of honor.



©Galloway

Scene on the Alaska railroad from Seward to Fairbanks, just completed at a cost of $56,000,000 after 9 years of work. Transportation remains one of Alaska's great problems, ocean freight rates from Seattle to Anchorage, 1,500 miles, being five times the rates for the 7,000-mile voyage to Hongkong

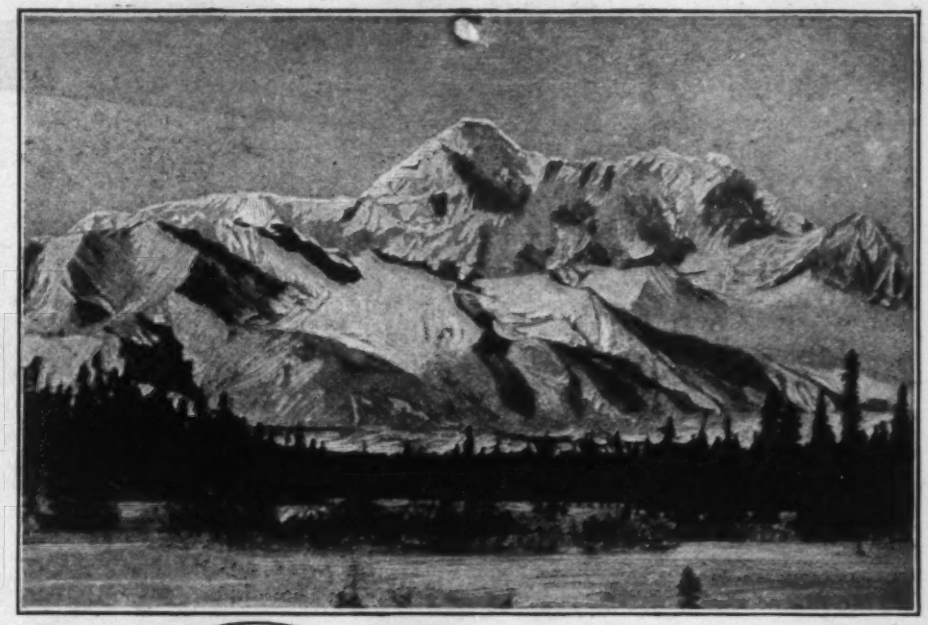
As we drove in automobiles and limousines through the town and up to the governor's residence—located on an eminence commanding a view of the entire harbor—we noticed a large sign beside an old yellow building. It stated grimly, "This is the Capitol Building!"

The structure looked like an old deserted garage and our government officials' glimpse of it that rainy day should be sufficient to put through the $250,000 appropriation for a new Alaskan building, which, at present, the rival city of Anchorage is charged with plotting to hold up.

It kept on raining. There is thirteen feet of rainfall in southeastern Alaska, and most of the annual quota seemed to be pouring over the President's hearers, as he delivered his speech from the porch of the Governor's Mansion.

All day long, while the Cabinet ladies went shopping on a souvenir spree and toted home totem poles, walrus-ivory, gold nuggets, earrings and jewelry, their husbands were engaged in official conferences with the citizens.

Secretary Wallace was told of the ripe forests where fir, spruce and birch trees are dying out; trappers came forward with their plea for protection of fur-bearing animals—of the otter, mink, fox and beaver, which fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Agriculture. In passing, we were amused to note that the patrician seal, in the far-off Pribilof Islands, which have paid three and one-half millions profits during the past year, belong to Secretary Hoover in the Department of Commerce, while the great reindeer herds, that we were soon to see farther north, are controlled by the Bureau of Education! Thus incongruously is jurisdiction over Alaska's riches divided up among Washington bureaus.



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Mt. McKinley, tallest peak on the North American continent, seen from the government railroad

© Keystone

Harry Karstens, conqueror of Mt. McKinley, now in charge of Mt. McKinley National Park

Alaska's greatest virgin asset is her mineral wealth—gold, silver, copper, zinc, antimony and tungsten; but seventy per cent of her present population is directly interested in the fisheries. Her coal and large areas of platinum are yet to be exploited.

© Pacific & Atlantic

Number one hard wheat grows twenty bushels to the acre at Fairbanks within two degrees of the Arctic Circle. Among other successful crops are turnips, cabbage, garden peas, parsnips, sugar beets, radishes and alfalfa. The Agricultural college at Fairbanks is rapidly stimulating farming development

AFTER Juneau, Skagway—one-time outfitting place for adventuresome seekers of the Klondike's golden fleece. Early in the morning four hundred and eighty-four residents of the town gathered on the wharf where once some twenty thousand of gold-thirsty miners had landed. At the picturesque, deserted piers, the *Henderson* berthed in ghostly stillness. The precipitous wall of the towering cliff, two hundred feet high, and so near the ship that we could almost touch it, was covered with names and signs—painted by old prospectors and tourists from all over the world.

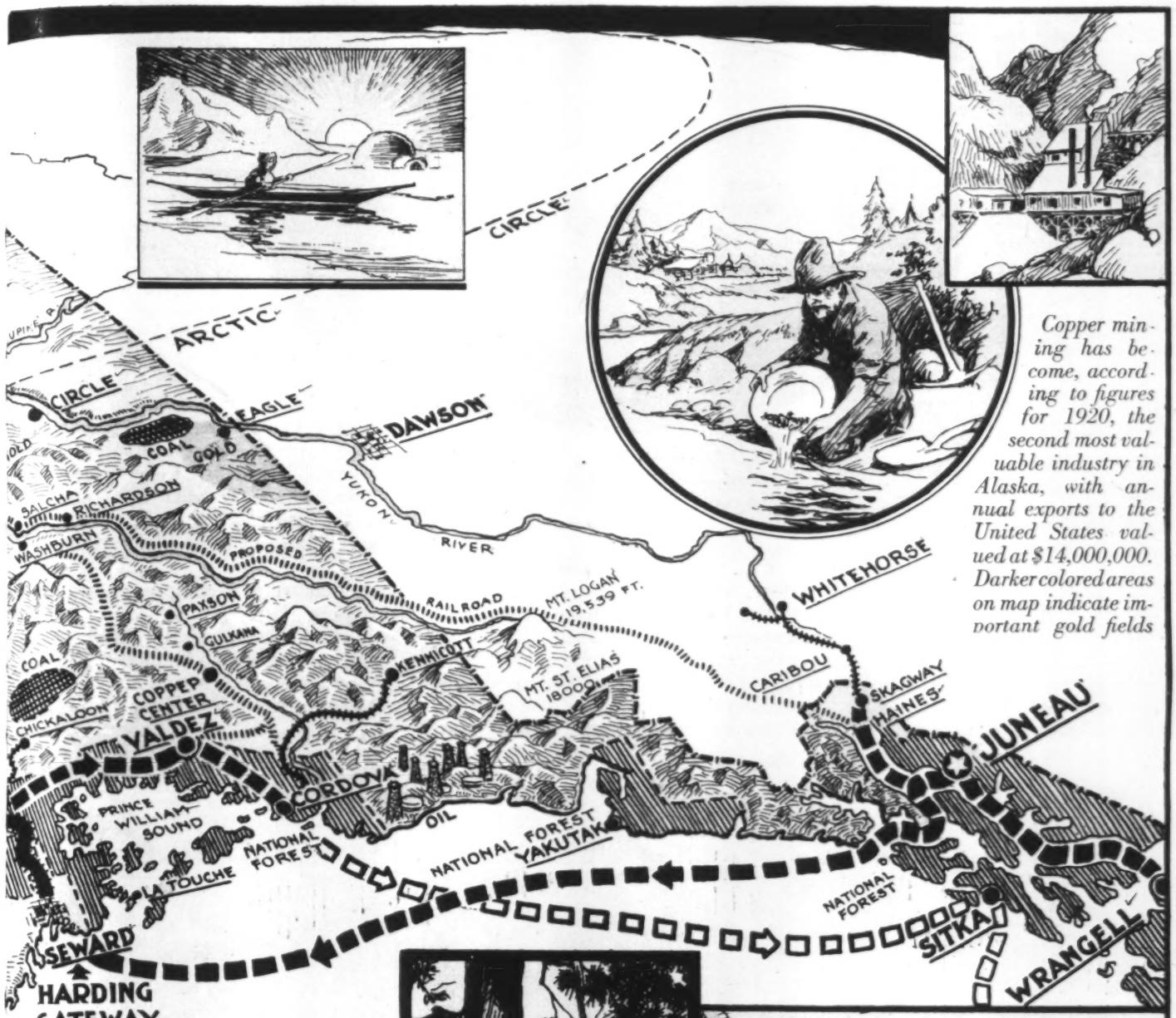
On the wharf, after talking informally to a little group of old miners, the President turned to me, and remarked with a quiet smile:

Some 200,000 reindeer are now being raised for meat, and there is pasturage for 30,000,000

Point Barrow is 300 miles within the Arctic Circle, while the southern tip of Alaska is in nearly the same latitude as Hamburg

Sealskin furs of the Pribilof Islands and fox, otter and other furs from the interior were exported to the United States in 1920 to the value of three million dollars Silver, lead, gypsum, antimony, nickel and marble are among the less familiar Alaskan resources now being developed

There are five active and sixteen inactive volcanoes in Alaska, and the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, in the region of Katmai National Monument, is the most amazing scene of constant volcanic activity in the world



Copper mining has become, according to figures for 1920, the second most valuable industry in Alaska, with annual exports to the United States valued at $14,000,000. Darker colored areas on map indicate important gold fields

Alaskan fisheries employ over 15,000 persons, produce on an average over 3,000,000 cases of salmon annually, and sent to the United States in 1920 fish valued at $37,000,000—five times more than the value of the gold exports, and ten times more than the value of the fur exports

Alaska, with an area one third greater than the Atlantic States, has no more white residents than there are office workers in the Equitable Building in New York City. Yet this still sparsely populated empire has yielded over a billion dollars worth of products since it was purchased in 1867 from Russia for $7,200,000. Shaded portions along the southeastern coast of the map indicate vast timber lands from which 18,000,000 feet of lumber were taken in 1922. Here is a future source of news print

"These people amaze me in the way they comprehend. The marvel of Alaska to me is the virility of every individual I see. Of course environment constantly plays an important part in molding strong characters and strong people. Here the people have achieved, in this great out-of-doors, a freedom from the restraints of conventionality that helps in the making of strong characters and strong friendships. The longer I live the more firm is my belief that the greatest possession in the world is dependable friendships."

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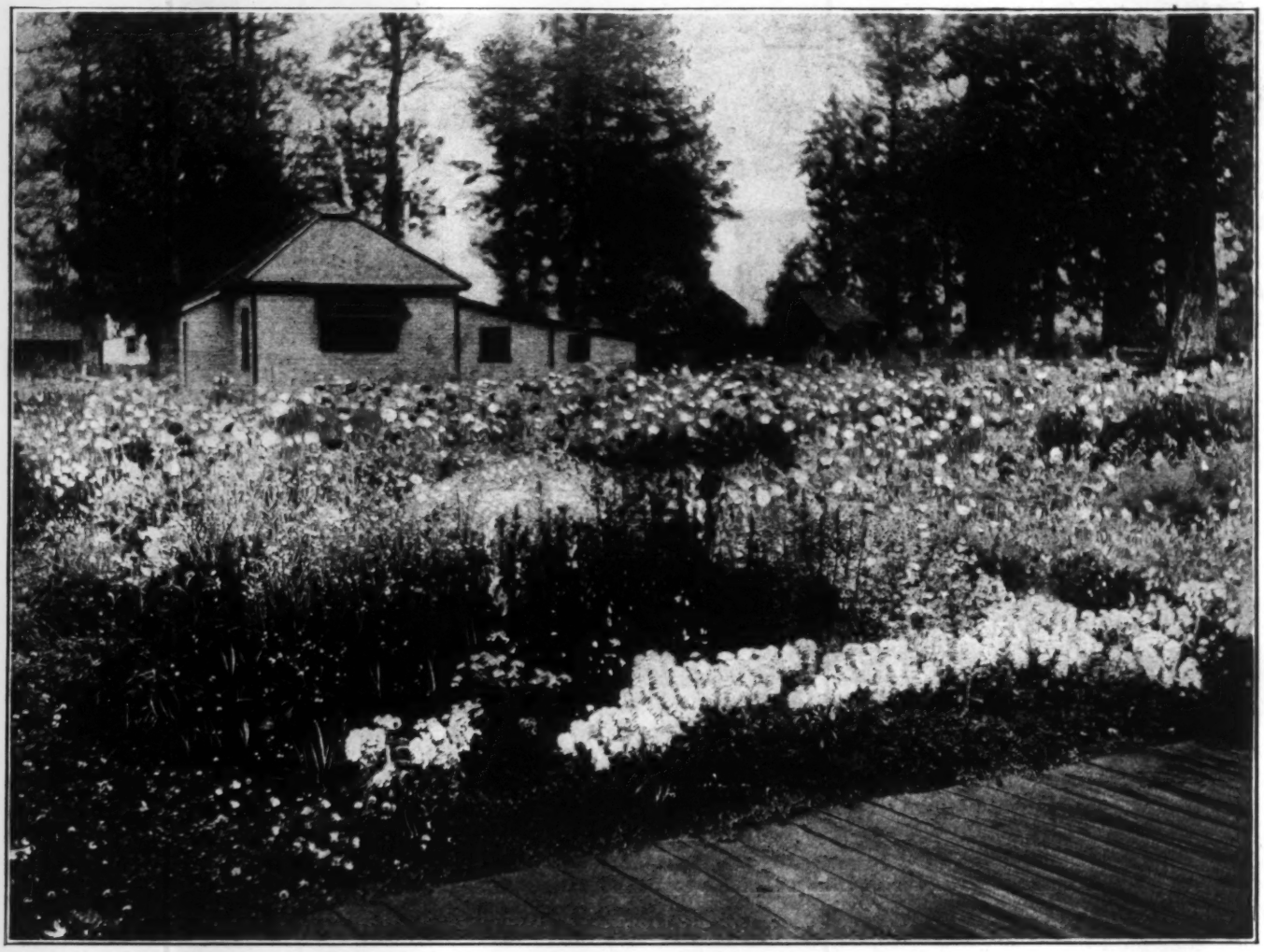
Scene in the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, an Alaskan region of volcanic marvels, unequalled elsewhere on earth

The deserted streets and buildings of Skagway are ghostlike remembrances of a wild past, when prospectors celebrated here before setting out over the Chilkoot Pass, as a short cut to the Yukon and Dawson. There is scarcely a gulch or canyon along the route that has not held in its icy grasp the remains of a gold-seeker. Today a peculiar restfulness broods in this picturesque little town, with its thrilling memories of gambling and adventure. Palatial in their furnishings are the homes built here by wealthy fortune-seekers in days gone by. Many residents are firm in the belief that some day Skagway will come into its own again, this time as the tourist gateway to Alaska. The never-dying hope of the prospector prevails among the people.

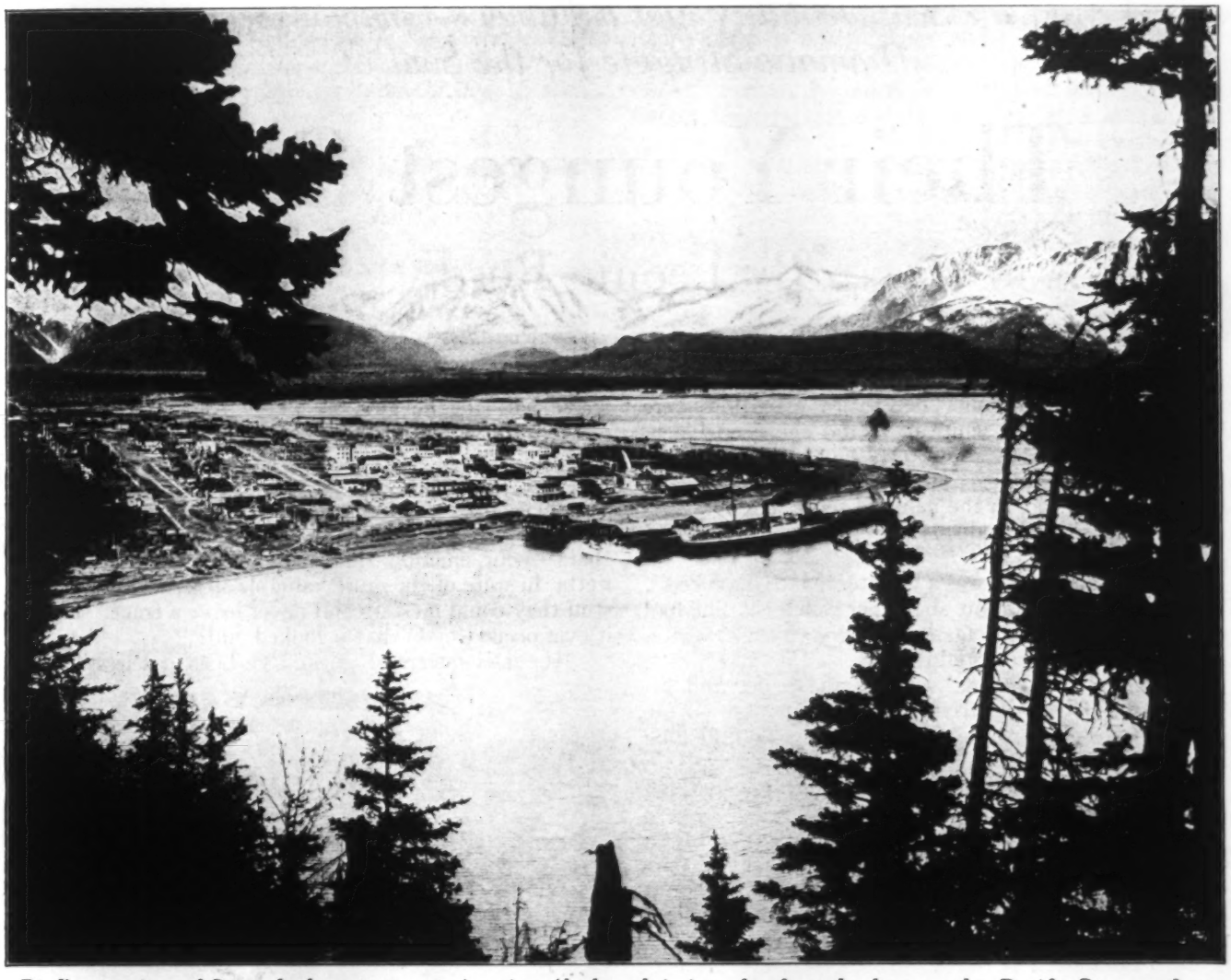
Now came the chill of a three-day's voyage to Seward, across the Gulf of Alaska, the northern crest of the Pacific, that just escapes the Japan Current. Here originate the storms and blizzards that sweep the United States and Canada from one end to the other. Even the Texas "norther" is born in these frigid straits amid floating icebergs.

It was on this voyage that we first glimpsed, northward over the black waters, majestic Mt. St. Elias, the Muir Glacier and the lofty ice-peaks of the Alaskan range. Mt. St. Elias marks the Canadian boundary. It is the corner-stake of Alaska. From here the line runs north on the 141st parallel to the Arctic Sea—just missing the Klondike in Canada.



Garden in Valdez, typical of the profusion of beautiful Alaskan flowers, always astonishing to tourists

© The Alaska Shop



Bird's-eye view of Seward, the gateway to interior Alaska, claiming the finest harbor on the Pacific Coast and an "almost perfect climate." Seward is the seaward terminus of the Alaska railroad

Twenty miles away from our course lay the great Melaspina and Bering Glaciers, that outline with their icy crags two hundred miles of coast. They cover an area larger than all Switzerland.

INTO the placid waters of Resurrection Bay we sailed at last, with the warm breath of land and vegetation again in our nostrils. Renamed the "Harding Gateway," in honor of its distinguished visitor, this great waterway, forty miles square, gives access to the town of Seward, itself named for Secretary Seward of Lincoln's Cabinet who purchased Alaska from the Russian Government in 1867 for $7,200,000, or the princely sum of about two cents per acre.

Seward is the seaward terminus of the four hundred and ninety-seven mile Alaskan Central Railway, recently completed northward to Fairbanks and operated by the Government as an expensive luxury, at a present loss of three quarters of a million a year, but with the promise of invaluable service in the development of the interior. It has provided an American route to the Yukon. The cars running directly to the wharf of an all-winter port make it an ideal terminal.

This must be a real railroad with a model Pullman train to carry the Presidential party, even if it became necessary to get together all the equipment the railroad possessed. And this was done. Nothing was omitted. There were Pullmans, compartment cars, a splendidly-equipped diner. The waitresses were young restaurant queens who did volunteer duty for the trip. The porters' uniforms were quite in keeping with the volunteer porters themselves, underneath whose jackets beat the hearts of barber, shopkeeper and trapper. One wore a baseball cap, another a naval cap, but the magic word "PORTER" was emblazoned on each, and Pullman dignity at the car step was fully maintained.

At the head of the train, waiting to pull us over the mountain passes to Fairbanks, was Uncle Sam's old Locomotive 618 that I remembered seeing in Panama, years ago, during the construction of the Canal.

Our long journey toward the Arctic Circle started over the right-of-way of the first railroad built in Alaska. Seventy-two miles of this line were constructed by the old Alaska Central many years ago and later practically abandoned.

Soon we were traveling past monster glaciers that gleamed like innumerable gems in their mountain settings. Most of the ice packed deeply in these valleys has been there for thousands of years since the last glacial period. The dirt washed down upon them from the ridges made giant wagon tracks across their dazzling surfaces. No less than eighteen impressive mountain waterfalls, glistening in the sunlight, caught our eyes, already almost jaded with Alaska's bewildering beauties.

On their Dodge speeder—a rail automobile used in construction work—President and Mrs. Harding enjoyed the splendors of a continent's mountain ranges heaped together in wild majesty. [*Continued on page 110*]

A Mother's Sentimentality and a Father's Common Sense in a Dramatic Struggle for the Soul of

Their Youngest Son

By Leonie Rose

Illustrations by Lawrence Herndon

CLOSE-SHAVEN, his skin ruddy with clean, healthy blood, his graying hair glistening beneath the light from the table lamp, Daniel Hicks fingered a hawthorn vase as though his entire attention were absorbed by the dead white of it and the deep black, untouched by a hybrid blue. He had always disliked blurred, distorted things concocted in the name of art. Distorted deeds, too, in the name of sentiment that was nothing but sentimentalism—a refusal to face facts. Where would it end?

His wife, facing him, was a tribute, too, to his success. There was nothing blatant about her richness. She had gradually cultivated the taste necessary to tone down a natural predilection for bright colors.

Carefully, with the respect due the artist and his work, Daniel Hicks replaced the hawthorn vase on the table, far enough from the edge for safety, and, looking directly at his wife, forced her eyes to meet his.

"So—Henrietta—you say the burglar got nothing but the sapphire and diamond bracelet?"

His wife dropped the ivory letter opener she had been nervously fingering and as her blue eyes met his they became frank, wide-open, confidential. Her small mouth rounded childishly.

"That's all he took, Dan." The sentence came out in one deep exhalation of relief. "It's funny, too, isn't it, with all the other stuff in the house? There is that string of pearls you gave me with the first big money you made. You remember—that time you beat Jeff Connor at his own game. He never did get——"

"When did you first miss it?"

"Why—when I told you. It was—when I called you up——"

"You told me you missed it in the morning; that it was gone from your dressing table when you awoke."

"Oh, no—Dan; I couldn't have said that. It was not until I got back from shopping that I missed it. I wanted to wear it this evening and——"

"All right; I'll have the detectives out here in the morning and we'll look into this thing. This isn't the first time you've had jewelry stolen, with no trace of the thief. If there are such clever thieves, there must also be clever catchers of thieves. I'll look into this. I'll have everybody in this house searched."

Mrs. Hicks rubbed her finger tips, as if arrested circulation had left them cold.

"Why, Dan, you don't think the servants——I don't want to accuse any of them unless we're positively certain. You know they are good servants and good ones are hard to get. You know how detectives are—and we've had all the girls so long. And the butler—he worked for the Carsons for years; till they went to England to live. I don't want to——"

"I don't intend to buy jewelry as a bonus for the servants, no matter how efficient they are. Periodically things disappear; your gold mesh bag—your platinum chain—your emerald ring. Always your things, Henrietta, in spite of the more valuable silver in the house—stuff they could melt up and never leave a trace. Didn't it ever occur to you that it looked odd?"

"It—it is queer. I guess I've been careless." She

Fresh as a girl who has just come from the hands of a skillful maid, Eleanor was looking up at him

smiled contritely, as though confessing a fault for which she knew she would be forgiven—for which she always had been forgiven—a childish irresponsibility.

But there was no responsive smile on Daniel Hicks' face.

"I INTEND to go to the bottom of this—this burglary. This is one time it won't be hushed up. If the servants are guilty, they'll pay; and if they are innocent, I'll find out who did steal the stuff."

"Oh, yes, Dan—I do hope you will." His wife's smile was bright and artificial, but she bit her lower lip, as if the prospect were not as pleasing as her smile would indicate. "It'll be such a relief. I know you can unravel it when no one else can."

"I can, Henrietta—and don't think for a moment that it won't be done."

"Yes, dear. But now—won't you please put on your dinner coat? Helen and Russell are having dinner with us tonight and—and, too, I think you ought to get into the habit of dressing for dinner every night. The Carsons always did, and one has to——"

"Again? Don't Helen and Russell ever dine at home?"

"Your eldest son, Dan—surely you don't mind having them here. I should think you would like it." She was on the defensive now, her chin held high and set as squarely as its conical formation would permit.

"I want to dine at my own home once in a while without having a lot of chattering people here and——"

"But your own son!" she protested.

"He's worse than the rest; he never has a sensible word to say. I sometimes wonder how he can be my son."

"You never were fair to Russell. He's not so handsome as Murray and Joe, but he's such a dear, thoughtful boy and as polished as——"

"As a fake mining-stock salesman. I should think he'd bore even Helen to death. She's not quite a fool, even if she did marry Russell. She's close enough, goodness knows. That's the only reason she comes here so much; she likes good food that she doesn't have to pay for."

"I think she's generous to a fault." The mutinous set of full, tinted lips was incongruous beneath the baby-blue eyes and bright golden hair.

"Yes. Because she provides a studio for your eldest son where he can waste his time pretending to paint. She likes the idea of being married to an artist because her father made his money in meat."

"Of course you never did think Russell had any talent for art. You——"

"Art! He doesn't even know the meaning of the word. That's art"—Daniel Hicks thrust the hawthorn vase toward her—"and that's art." He indicated a superb etching by Zorn that hung at the right of the stone mantel. "But those skeleton-faced women with purple eye sockets and broom-handle legs are simply an excuse to maintain a studio where he can entertain the people Helen wants to know and where he can have a visible pretext for not working." There was a glow in his eyes as of anger barely restrained and his jaws came together with a snap.

"Now—now, Dan, don't be unreasonable again. Be nice to them, dear. They'll be leaving soon; they're going to Jamaica, you know, and——"

"I hope they stay there!"

"And Murray is going with them."

"Murray!"

"Yes."

"Why, you told me Murray had promised to get a job."

"Well, you see—he did try, but there didn't seem to be any opening that he could accept and——"

"I guess not. All the jobs as bank presidents had been taken."

"He will go to work when he returns from Jamaica," she told him.

"That's a fine solution for the unemployment question, Henrietta. When a man is out of work—let him go to Jamaica. What's Murray going on? He can't get any more money out of me, that's certain."

"He'll manage somehow; he always does."

"So it seems. Lived to be twenty-six years old and never worked for three months steadily in his life."

"Joe is working." She said this with an air of pride, as if she alone were responsible for it. "And Murray will find the right sort of work sooner or later, you may be sure of that. He's been——"

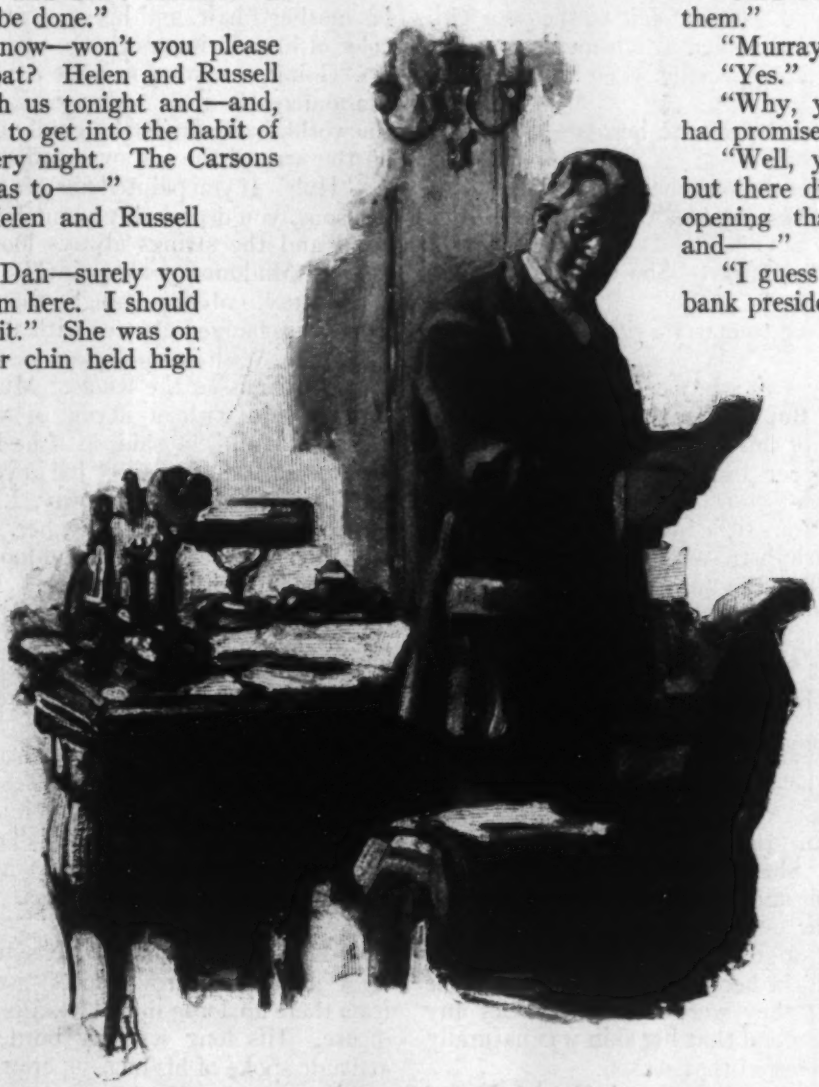
"Huh! It's time some other man in this family earned a living beside me. By the way, Joe hasn't paid his board for two weeks. I told you that it was to be paid regularly—to me."

"Why, Dan!"

"HE gets thirty dollars a week and plays golf at the Anniston Club. It's all *I* can do to afford it."

"Dan—I want you to talk to Joe. He——"

"I will—and I'll talk to him straight. He'll pay board regularly or he'll get out. I paid board at home from the time I was thirteen."



With a triumpnant smile, Daniel Hicks saw Joe stop at Nell Peyton's desk, and bend protectingly above her

"I don't mean about that. You know what I think of our boys—our own flesh and blood paying money to live at their own home. It's something else and I'm just worried sick about it." She leaned forward, laying a plump, short-fingered hand on his knee, and, in a tone calculated to impress him with the enormity of the charge, said: "He spends all of his spare time with Eleanor Peyton. I don't like it."

"Who's she?" her husband demanded. "Some doll-faced flapper that Helen brought here because her family live east of the Avenue?"

"WHY—no. She's your stenographer. And he takes her everywhere."

"Oh—Nell! So he takes her everywhere, does he?" The twinkle in his eyes belied the close-set lips.

"Yes, and it won't do. It isn't fair to the poor girl. You know what people say when a rich man's son goes with a poor girl like that, especially when she works for his father."

"You don't want him to go with her; to—er—marry her?"

"Certainly not. But I don't believe it's as bad as that. I don't think he has any idea of marrying——"

"You don't? Why not?"

"He can't afford to marry. She hasn't anything and——"

"You mean he'd have to marry a rich girl like Helen, huh?"

"Yes. It's the only way a boy can marry now, if he wants to marry early. But—under the circumstances, he sees entirely too much of this Peyton person. There are Helen and Russell now; run and dress—like a dear. And you'll speak to Joe, won't you?"

"I'm not dressing. You say he is with her all the time?"

"Yes. I've been much distressed about it. You'll have to find a way to end it. I'm sure he'll listen to you."

Daniel Hicks darted a sharp glance at his wife. Henrietta had always had a remarkable knack of getting her own way; a knack that amounted to genius. She was persistent, too; no letting up when she had in mind a definite objective.

Various incidents marshalled themselves down the columns of his mind as he stared, unblinking, into space—incidents that had short-circuited his own direct, outspoken plans. Into his reflections pierced the sharp, high voice of Helen. She came rushing in with an air of brimming good cheer and cordiality that she had evidently admired in some one else. It was new to her—assumed like a new hat or gown—and apt to be discarded soon. She was original in her many imitations, for she made no pretense that they were lasting qualities any more than she would pretend that her skin was naturally the brunet tone she preferred that season.

She fluttered around the back of Daniel Hicks' chair, ignoring his indifference.

"Hello, pater." Russell sauntered in, hands already fumbling for a cigarette case. "How goes it in the busy marts of trade?" He leaned limply against the edge of the table while Daniel Hicks ostentatiously shoved the hawthorn vase back beyond all possible contact.

WITH a half smile, Russell glanced at his reflection in the great mirror above the mantel and then turned his attention to the lighting of his cigarette, as if well satisfied with what he had seen there. He looked down at the small group as from great mental and physical heights as he flicked out his match with one twist of his thumb and forefinger.

"Saw a corking exhibition today—some postimpressionistic stuff. Very much like my work—some of it. Like to see it, pater?" he asked, smiling affably.

"Don't call me pater," Daniel Hicks said savagely. "It sounds so infernally affected. It's impressionistic, too, your language of late."

"What's on the old bean tonight, pater? You seem to have something that's stinging you. You need a change; better come along to Jamaica with us."

"Huh! Somebody in this family has to stay home and work."

"Come now—life isn't all work, you know. Over on the Continent people know more about living. They take time to——"

"They did, you mean; as long as they had a thoughtful father or grandfather to save up money for them. They've gotten over that."

Russell twisted a downy silken mustache the color of his mother's hair, and his eyes, also closely following the color of his adoring mother's, turned toward her.

"Going to paint you some day, mater—a new sort of Madonna—the real mother creature; the best mother in the world." He drifted languidly toward her and perched on the arm of the big overstuffed chair she occupied.

"Huh! If you painted her as a modern mother seen by her sons, you'd probably paint her with a purse in each hand and the strings always loose. That's the ultra-modern Madonna *you'd* paint!"

Murray, entering, caught the last words, as the two women exchanged glances with Russell at Daniel Hicks' outburst. With an indifferent gesture of long slim hands, Russell dismissed the whole. Murray accomplished the same result with a shrug of well-draped shoulders.

"Hello, all," he said, as if he had not overheard the acid retort of his father. "Joe in yet—or is he dining with the little steno? By the way, I saw him at the Eyrie Supper Club last night with her. You ought to talk to him, father. She's a wonderful-looking girl for her style—one could take her anywhere. But still—she's your stenographer, you know."

"What were *you* doing there? You aren't working. That reminds me—didn't you say last week that you were going to work? Now your mother says you're going to Jamaica instead and——"

"My dear father, the social advantages of going to Jamaica will outweigh the benefits of any job I could get. You know I offered to go into your office and——"

"Yes, I know you did." There was a significant silence during which the group surrounding Daniel Hicks exchanged surreptitious glances.

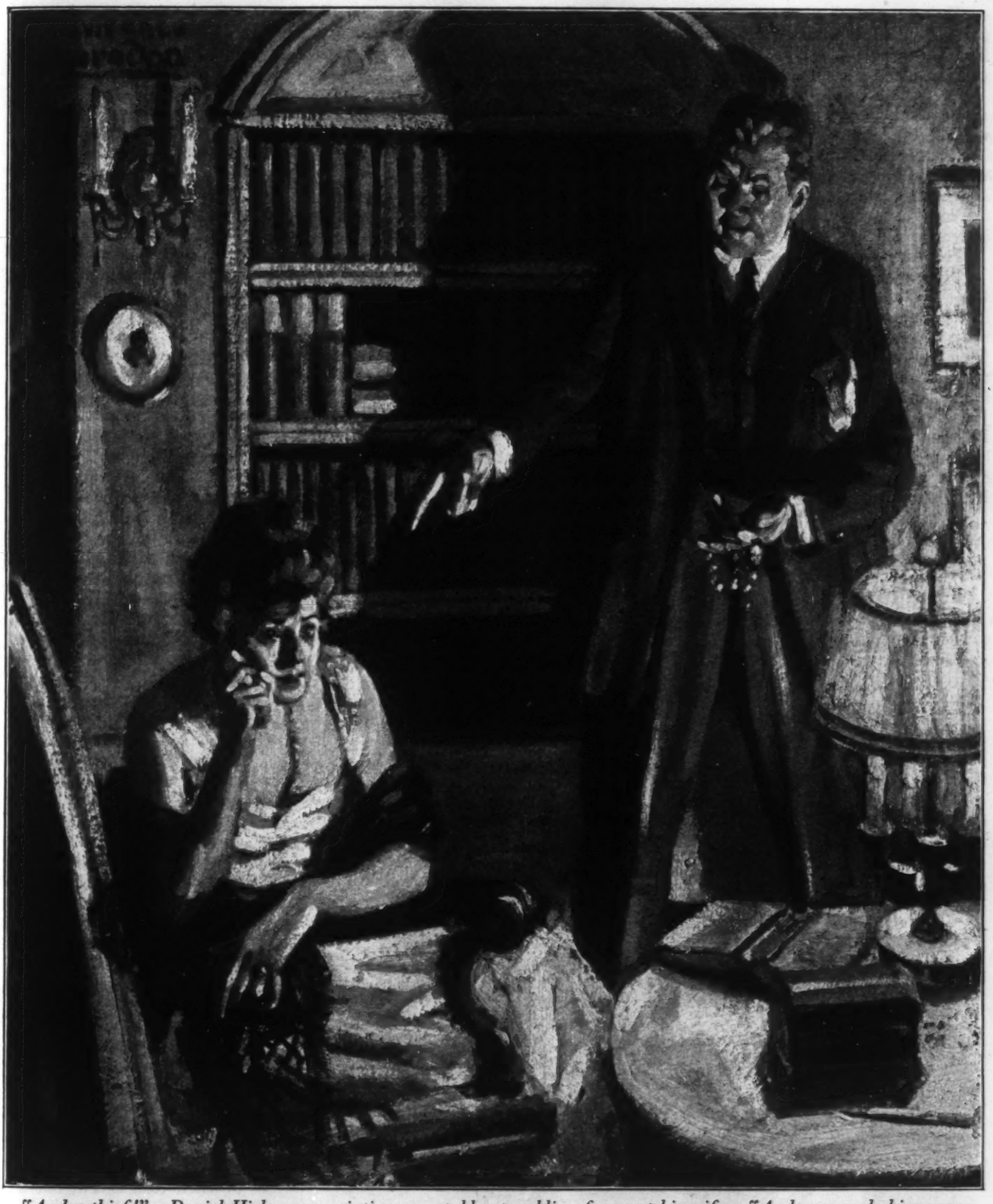
HE looked at his two sons with their long slender legs and narrow waists; ascetic below the chin—from there up, loose-lipped weaklings, wills atrophied from disuse. His long scrutiny bordered on contempt; his attitude spoke of his own superiority to these other masculine creatures who were his sons, yet strangely—not his sons.

"About this theft"—Daniel Hicks threw out the remark as he might have thrown a bomb—"I suppose your mother has told you that her sapphire and diamond bracelet was stolen. I intend to put detectives on the case and if you have any information to give—any idea as to the identity of the thief, you can give the clue to the detectives. I intend to put a stop to these periodical thefts."

There was a mild buzz of assurance of all the aid in the world, and, in the midst of the buzz, Joe—the youngest son of the Hicks' family—strolled in as if he were not aware that he was late for dinner.

"Hello, dad," he said casually, as he passed him to go to his mother and to perch on the arm of her chair.

Daniel Hicks watched him as he crossed the room.



"And a thief!" Daniel Hicks rose, pointing one stubby, trembling finger at his wife. "And you made him one; you and your infernal sentimentalism. You closed your eyes to his weaknesses"

There was a certain resemblance to himself, but the ruggedness of the older man was toned down in the younger. He was not quite so aggressive or determined, but with an immense capacity for good or evil, and, as yet, dependent upon outward things for the direction his energies might take. Gray eyes that spoke of earnestness and deep feeling; an upward curving mouth that laughed at feeling as something feminine. He was fresh clay to be molded by a woman's hand. A touch this way—a touch that, and he would respond with all the warmth of his plastic energy.

Daniel Hicks knew that his wife was annoyed with Joe—annoyed at his attentions to Eleanor Peyton and freshly irritated at the news Murray had just brought, but no hint of this showed in her attitude toward her youngest son. He smiled grimly at Joe's immediate response to his mother's almost flirtatious advance. He knew only too well her capacity for getting her own way.

It was not until dinner was over and the family had gone about their several separate interests that Daniel Hicks again had a word with his wife, and then it was she who broached the subject that filled his mind.

SHE leaned forward, an intense seriousness on her shallow face.

"Daniel, Murray told me just before he left that Joe is with that Peyton girl so much that every one is talking about it. He meets them even at luncheon and dining at the most exclusive places. I'm terribly distressed about it, really."

Her husband's grunt was noncommittal.

"I've just thought of a plan that I'm sure will work. I'm sure that Joe isn't so infatuated that he would not look at another girl, and I know the dearest, prettiest little creature in the world. I will invite her to visit me for a few weeks and the visit can easily be extended if they like one another. I'll have a perfectly good excuse—lonely, so many of the family going to Jamaica. See? Joe will have to be nice to her, Murray being away—and I'll take care that no other man gets a chance to take her out. Leave Joe to me and don't worry. I'll cure him of Eleanoritis in less than a month. You know me, Dan, when I make up my mind about anything."

"Periodically things disappear—always your things, Henrietta," said Daniel Hicks. "Didn't it ever occur to you that it looked odd?"

Daniel Hicks did know. Curiously, beneath that frivolous exterior there lay an obstinacy and determination that stopped at nothing. She would mold Joe to her opinions with mother love—with over-indulgence.

"I can see you've been worrying about Joe, but you needn't," she went on. "Just leave it all to me. Joe will be better fixed than Russell, even. Peggy Worth's father left more than a million and there are only two children. Leave Joe to me."

"To you—to you!"

"Yes. I'll soon cure him of his present infatuation."

A picture of Joe—the baby—came to him. Joe, the last and dearest. Too amiable to have had his disposition spoiled even by incessant laxity of discipline; too healthy to have had his constitution ruined by over-indulgence. Still too healthy mentally to wish to be a parasite. That was Joe at twenty-two. What would he be like at Murray's age—twenty-six; or Russell's—twenty-eight? Idler, dilettante, a parasitical poseur?

"TELL Joe that I want him to come to my office in the morning, Henrietta; I want to talk to him," Daniel Hicks said, as he rose to leave the room.

"You needn't worry with him, Dan. If you'll leave him to me, I'll make a match between him and Peggy Worth in six months. I'm sure I can handle him."

Daniel Hicks was sure, too; so sure that he turned a face grown suddenly threatening toward his wife.

"I want Joe in my office tomorrow morning. I mean it. If he isn't there, I'll have every detective in the city on the trail of the sapphire bracelet and—you—you won't have a servant left on the place." His tone was as significant as the look he gave her.

He stalked out of the room, then, with a faintly uttered, "I'll tell him, Dan," sent after him.

AND in the morning before Daniel Hicks had gone through the correspondence that Eleanor Peyton had laid upon his desk, Joe was there. He heard him first in the outer office, stopping for a chat with Eleanor. He watched them both for a moment as Joe bent toward the girl.

Fresh as a girl who has just come from the hands of a skillful maid, Eleanor was looking up at him—her smooth brown hair brushed to a sheen; not a stray lock to break the clean outline of her well-shaped head. She was as wholesome as a tray of unspecked fruit. Her skin was creamy; her lips a faint pink—not the scarlet, natural or artificial, of the seductive, sensuous siren so beloved by those who prate of women's charms. Here was a girl, he knew,

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who would use no roundabout methods to gain a point; open, aboveboard and direct, she scorned both flattery and cajolery as the threadbare weapons of sex even as she scorned the flimsy, half-revealing rags that appealed to the primitive in man when there is no other appeal of mind or spirit to serve.

In the face Joe bent toward her, Daniel Hicks saw its match for honesty and candor. That was Joe now. Russell had been like that once—possibly the chin not quite so square—but a clean youth with potentialities. He had been blind not to have seen the slow weakening of will under the freely lavished luxury.

With a quick, friendly pressure of his hand, Eleanor sent Joe in to his waiting father.

Daniel Hicks looked up as if just aware of his proximity, and down deep in his heart and behind unfathomable eyes he buried all his pride and love for this clean-cut boy. The face he lifted showed nothing but disapproval—grave and all-embracing.

"Murray tells me that you spend most of your evenings at the Eyrie and I know that you spend too much of your spare time playing golf at the Anniston Club. Now I——"

"Suppose I do go to the Eyrie—Murray is there every night himself," Joe broke in.

"I myself can afford the Anniston, but I am not living on thirty dollars a week," his father continued, without the slightest attention to Joe's interruption, "and your mother has complained to me"—he cleared his throat and sunk his chin deeper into his collar as he looked squarely at his son—"that you waste too much of your time running around with Nell—with my stenographer. Is that true?"

"Oh, come now! Why all this sudden stew about it? You knew that I went with Nell. You even knew that I took her to dinner whenever she would go. Now you——"

"I WON'T have it; your mother won't have it. She doesn't care to see you make a mésalliance."

"Mésalliance!" cried Joe. "Don't be melodramatic, dad. That's mother's word—not yours. Nell comes from just as good a family as ours, maybe better—and you know it."

"And you can't afford to marry. You get thirty dollars a week and—by the way, you still owe me for two weeks' board. I want the money. I am through with keeping grown sons. I paid board long before I was your age and I expect you to."

"Hard up, dad?" There was malicious patronage in the tone.

"Yes. Too hard up not to collect the board you agreed to pay."

"I'm stony and that's a fact. Give it to you next week."

"I don't mean for you to borrow from your mother to pay me. That's just like putting it from one pocket into another. I want it to come direct from you. That's all I have to say to you except to repeat that I won't have you running around with—with my stenographer. Your mother does not approve of it. She's a very worthy girl, no doubt, but she's not in your class."

"Why, what's come over you? You always thought Nell was a peach and——"

"I won't have it, you hear? I won't have it! Do you want to worry your poor mother to death? She is going to have a guest for a few weeks—Miss—Miss Peggy Worth and I want you to see that you are nice to her. She is a girl your mother knows and likes and——"

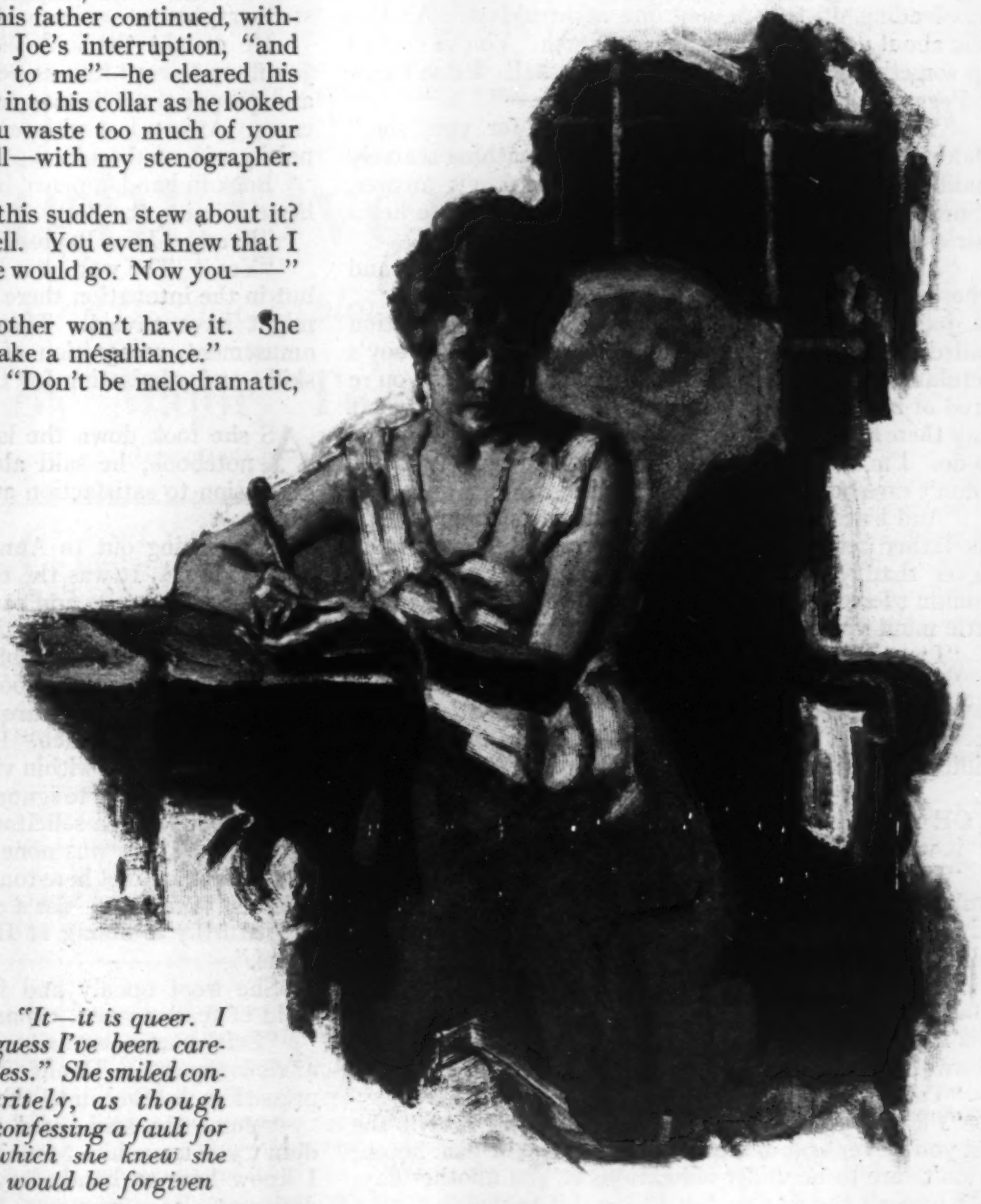
"SHE can just stop the matchmaking right now. I won't let anybody select my wife for me. I'm not Russell."

"Don't talk that way to me and don't talk that way about your mother. She knows what is best for you," he added sternly.

"I won't let any one dictate to me. Just because I live at home doesn't give either you or mother the right to map out my whole life. I can make a living anywhere."

Joe's temper was rising and as he faced his father, sparks glinted in his gray eyes. His chin squared. His color rose.

Strangely enough, his father—whose voice rose in



"It—it is queer. I guess I've been careless." She smiled contritely, as though confessing a fault for which she knew she would be forgiven

harsh, domineering tones calculated to madden any one but a craven—was calm as to pose and his eyes were cool. None of the flash of battle in them. He eyed Joe from beneath suddenly lowered lids.

"I won't have any impertinence from you, young man. You are just a cub who thinks he is grown and"—he hesitated, as if to find just the right word, just the right combustible to add to the small heap already laid—"and who never has paid his own way and who even thinks of marrying a girl who hasn't a cent and bringing her home for his father to support. She's not the girl for you and I forbid you to see her or to have anything more to do with her. That's final!"

"You don't expect me to drop Nell because you've suddenly lost your mind, do you, dad? Well, I'll tell you now—I won't. That's final."

"Then I'll discharge her."

"She can get another job the same day."

"YOU are an impertinent young idiot without a modicum of brain in your head. But I'll leave you to your mother. She'll see that you come to your senses. You listen to her or—you can clear out."

"Between you and mother, you are determined to make me give up Nell. I don't know what has happened to you. You always liked Nell. I see now what mother was leading up to this morning at breakfast. All this talk about dear, attractive Peggy Worth. You've cooked up something between you; I can see that. I don't care if Peggy Worth is pretty and rich. I——"

"Your mother knows what is best for you, son." Daniel Hicks watched Joe closely, his breathing scarcely audible, as though much hung on the boy's answer. "She'll convince you that she is right, if you give her a fair chance. She——"

"I won't drop Nell like that. I'll marry when and where I please."

Joe was frankly sulking now; the fire of indignation had died down and there was nothing left but a boy's petulance—not a note of sincere rebellion. "If you're tired of having me in the house, I'll get out, but I won't stay there and be bullied into doing what you all want me to do. I'm not going to play lap dog to Peggy Worth—I don't care how pretty or rich she is."

"And I won't have you going with my stenographer!" his father retorted. "She's a clever girl—much more clever than you are. You're a rich man's son or she wouldn't look at you. You'd know that, if you used the little mind you have. It's money she wants—not you."

"I won't have you talk about her like that. She——"

"She knows that sooner or later when I'm dead you'll have money and she'd be willing to go on and work to keep you till I did check out. And you'd be perfectly willing to sit down and let her keep you."

JOE rose, his face so flushed with genuine anger that it was brick-red.

"I've heard Nell insulted in every way that you could think of and myself insulted, too. You seem to think that I would sell myself to any one who would take care of me, and even mother—mother thinks that a few dollars would induce me to change my mind. I owe you board for two weeks, but I consider that your insults this morning have wiped out everything else I owe you. I owe you not even——"

"You are an ungrateful cub and——"

"I'll pay you the two weeks' board and that is the last you'll ever hear of me. I'm going to leave your house; I don't care to be under obligations to you another day. I—I haven't the money, but I'll send it to you."

"Borrow if from your mother, I suppose," said his father, sarcastically, with another keen look at his son.

"I'll earn it." The boy's jaws came together with a snap not unlike Daniel Hicks' own. "And I want you to know that I'll never forgive the things you've said about Nell, and worse—the things you've intimated. I wouldn't live in your house again if—if I was starving. I'll leave today."

"Yes—you'll leave!" There was an ironic twist to Daniel Hicks' lips and he watched Joe as carefully as a doctor watches his patient. "You're just as likely to leave your mother's side as Murray is. She——"

"Mother's a peach—the best mother in the world and if it was her house alone, I'd stay. But I'll never again live in yours."

And with that, his lips trembling in boyish rage which he strove to conceal with the back of his hand, Joe snatched his hat from the desk and rushed from the office.

Through the door Daniel Hicks saw him stop at Nell Peyton's desk, and bend protectingly above her. With a triumphant smile, a smile as relieved as that of a man who has just pulled off a successful deal that he feared would be difficult, he shuffled his papers and patted his knees in sheer and noiseless delight.

He heard Joe's voice raised in earnest conversation and the word dinner reached him. Composing his features to sternness, he pushed the buzzer for his stenographer.

He caught the look of anger and resentment that Joe flung toward him as he turned sideways in his chair and prepared to dictate to Nell as soon as she should enter. After a last whispered word to Nell, Joe clumped noisily out of the office.

Book in hand, a pencil between its covers, Nell seated herself beside the desk.

"Ready—Miss Peyton?"

"Yes." The word was simple, monosyllabic enough, but in the intonation there was a quality that an actress might have envied. There was, in that single word, amusement, recognition of a situation encompassed by skill—and admiration for the maneuverer.

AS she took down the last dictation and closed her notebook, he said abruptly, with a switching of expression to satisfaction and ease, and a suspicion of a wink:

"I'm going out to Anniston to play golf; won't be back today." It was the tone of a man who has pulled off a successful coup and earned a day off.

It was again dinner time when Daniel Hicks sat beside the long library table and smiled into space as he looked about the empty room. Soon the click-clack of his wife's slippers on the parquet spaces between the rugs announced her approach. He waited in immobile silence.

When she came within view, he saw that she had been weeping. He chose to ignore it. She dabbed at her eyes, obviously waiting a solicitous question as to the cause of her tears. There was none.

"Nice and quiet here tonight," her husband remarked. "Family dining out—for a change?"

"Murray is dining at Helen's and Joe—Joe has left home."

She wept openly and freely now, as if Joe were a child of tender years, exposed to unguessed perils.

"Left home—actually left, has he?" It was an anxious query. Daniel Hicks' square-tipped fingers pressed each other until they were a deep pink.

"Yes. He said—said that you——Oh, Dan, why didn't you leave him to me? I could have managed him. I know how to handle my boys. No man can be as diplomatic as a woman. Now you have ruined everything, I'm afraid.

[*Continued on page 116*]

The two men marched in, goose-stepping in solemn foolery, and then stopped in embarrassment when they saw the colonel was present

One Night Over the Lines

The True Story of an Historic Exploit of British Airmen in France

By Major "Tom" Vigors

Illustrations by Theodore Van Gorp

CLOSELY guarded secrets of the Allied airmen's thrilling adventures in night flying during the latter part of the war are revealed in these stories by a British flyer and secret service agent.

Writing under an assumed name because of military regulations, Major Vigors tells of historic exploits of his squadron during a flying career almost unparalleled for hair-raising adventure. The narratives are *bona fide* reminiscences of actual incidents of the aerial campaign on the West Front. Major Vigors' next story, in the December issue, will describe a counter-espionage exploit in which his squadron captured a German spy who, single-handed, had seriously menaced for weeks the grip of the British army on the Flanders front.

CIGARS and cigarettes had been lighted and coffee—vile stuff made from some sort of essence—had been served by the Mess Orderlies. Every one in the Mess, from the colonel down to the youngest newcomer — a youngster just out of college—settled down for a general powwow.

That evening dinner had been served very late. It was past ten o'clock before the first man got back from the small raid over the lines, and at one o'clock there was to be another start for the same place. We were discussing fresh plans and routes, in the hope of dodging as much "hate" as possible. Fritz had a nasty habit at night of waiting for the second visit, and then dosing out punishment with a liberal hand.

Two men, Whiteman and Parsons, were missing from our table. They had gone out on a special job and had not returned. They were so long overdue that an undercurrent of uneasiness and anxiety was apparent throughout the gathering. We could ill afford to lose men of their caliber.

Finally, however, the colonel's voice was heard above the buzz of conversation and we all quieted down.

"Boys," he said, "I was just remarking to the adjutant that all of you had better commence looking over your personal kits and scrapping any surplus stuff, in view of our proposed move south in a few days."

The colonel was referring to orders the squadron had received from the wing for a temporary change of quarters.

"Is it possible to get any further news of our destination, sir?" one of the men asked.

"Why, no, not at the present moment, but you will all know in good time. As far as I am able to say, we are to join in some offensive in which night aerial work is to

As the Gotha passed through the beam, Red swept past outside the glare, with his engine shut down

play a big part." The men stirred excitedly at the news.

"Well, sir, I for one shall be glad to have a change of surroundings, for a time at least," said one.

"Yes, I agree," the colonel answered. "Also, it may prove an opportunity for every man jack of you."

About two weeks previously we had been brought up to full strength with fresh drafts from England, and around the table were a number of fellows who had seen very little, if any, of actual work over the lines. As I was giving these youngsters some information about the coming raid, my eye was caught by the Squadron Honor Roll hanging over the colonel's chair, and I became suddenly quiet. Some of my best friends were on this Roll and it looked as if two more were to be added to it that very night. Seeing my worried look, Shorty leaned toward me.

"What's up, old man?" he asked.

"I'm thinking of those two chaps out there. Do you think they have got it at last, Shorty?"

"No, man, of course not. You'll find they will turn up like bad pennies somewhere or other." Shorty's expression, however, was not quite so certain as his voice.

"Red" Whiteman and Teddy Parsons, pilot and observer respectively, were bosom pals, although nobody could say why.

Red, as his name implies, was a red-headed and hot-tempered individual, bursting with energy and always eager to get into any sort of scrap. He never cared if it was a private or public one, but just waded in. And, being a big fellow, he invariably carried everything before him.

Teddy was the absolute opposite, a small, quiet boy, hardly ever speaking unless spoken to and fond of tucking himself away with a book in some out-of-the-way place.

But, according to Red, in the air Teddy changed completely, and became a perfect demon, usually being the first to see a chance, and a more reckless man, he vowed, never lived.

They were a wonderful combination and famous throughout the Corps for their mad escapades.

Red and Teddy had gone out with orders to execute a light-spotting job. It would require too much space to explain in detail exactly what light-spotting is, with all its ramifications, but, briefly, it consists in cruising up and down a certain sector, where, at an understood time, all official lights were put out for a period. Then the job was to locate and pinprick on the map the location of any suspicious lights, and report them. Quite a number of persons on our side of the lines, who were more interested in the Germans' welfare than the Allies', were discovered signaling in this way, and ultimately brought to justice.

On this night the sector was north from Poperinghe to Nieuport. Red and Teddy had received instructions to spot on our side of the trenches on the northern journey, after which, if nothing of vital importance was observed, they were to go over to the other side and stir up any trouble they cared to. The latter part of the order gave them just the sort of chance they reveled in.

Before starting, they had gleefully gone down to their 'bus to see that an abundance of good things in the shape of bombs and ammunition were loaded on.

When they took off for their excursion, two of the two-hundred-and-fifty-pound bombs were slung on the racks just behind the undercarriage axle, six twenty-five pounders, three on each side, were on the wing racks and seven drums of ammunition, in the proportion of one tracer to every four ordinary bullets, had been stored in the drum lockers in Teddy's "office."

It was nearly twelve o'clock now and disconsolate faces, from which practically all hope had gone, looked toward the colonel, who had been quiet for a long time with a worried look in his eyes.

Suddenly the "Old Man" stood up again and looked down the table.

"Well, I suppose it is no good hiding the facts. Undoubtedly those boys have met some——"

"Red" and Teddy Hunt for Trouble

THE unmistakable buzz of a Beardmore engine interrupted him, and he paused, with a wonderful look of hope shining in his eyes. Every one sat still, breathlessly listening to the sound of the approaching machine. Soon, with a roar, it rushed over the Mess, and then, with a splutter, the engine shut down. We all sat tense and quiet for the next five minutes.

Then we heard two men talking and joking outside the Mess. The door crashed open, and Red and Teddy marched in arm-in-arm, still in their flying suits and goose-stepping solemnly in the approved Hun fashion. Evidently they did not expect to find the colonel in the Mess, for when they saw him their eyes opened wide with consternation and they both automatically stopped, each wabbling about on one foot with the other held out weakly in front.

A roar of welcome greeted them. Every one was asking questions at the same time; there was a period of confusion before they were able to pull off their big boots and their flying suits and sit down at the table. When the uproar had subsided, the colonel asked, in a slightly shaking voice:

"What happened, Whiteman?"

Red looked up from his plate and flushed, then quietly answered:

"I've handed a report in to the orderly room for you, sir."

The "Old Man's" eyes twinkled at the modest reply, but it was not enough for the group around the table. Shouts and questions again rent the air and, little by little, the tale was extracted from the reticent couple. For sheer, cool cheek and pluck, I think their story beats anything I heard of in the service.

After taking off, they had proceeded to Poperinghe where their job started. During the journey there, nothing of particular importance was noted, although they did pinprick a few lights in the neighborhood of Hoogstade, and they were both eager for action when they turned at Nieuport, preparatory to going over the lines.

A heavy artillery duel was in progress at Nieuport. At least a dozen times Teddy had to fire off the night signal indicating that they were British. Further west, Dunkerque was receiving its usual nightly ration of crumps. Visibility was extremely good and had been so for three nights. And, on each of these nights, London had been visited by Huns who had successfully got through the many lines of defense, and liberally sprinkled the capital with bombs.

They crossed the lines without incident, at about 7,000 feet, and Red turned northeast toward Ostend; Teddy was looking down, itching, as Red put it, for trouble. Easing the throttle back, Red shouted:

"Mangy sort of night this, nothing doing at all."

"Perhaps they are all asleep. Shall I wake 'em up?" replied Teddy, stretching out a hand toward his Lewis gun.

"No, leave 'em alone. I'll carry on for a bit and then turn south. I can't understand why nothing has been shoved up at us, not even a blinking searchlight."

"Feel that way myself, Red. It's queer. Might do to hang on for a while."

Red opened up again and both of them continued to watch intently the area around Ostend, ready to get busy on the slightest provocation. But everything remained deadly quiet—quiet, that is, from the point of view of anti-aircraft activities. It was an absolutely new experience for Red and Teddy, as they usually managed to land themselves in hot shops. Naturally they felt suspicious, but were unable to satisfy themselves as to the reason, and both decided to turn and go back south in the next few minutes.

But just then a strange thing happened.

Over Ostend, and apparently at about the same height as Red was flying, a red light burst out, floated down for a few seconds and then died out. From the ground an answering red flash winked on and off.

Teddy leaned over to Red.

"Did you see that?"

Red nodded.

"What do you make of it?"

"Can't say. One thing, it explains why no searchlights and guns have been busy at us, since the Huns are flying around. It looks to me as if there's something fishy around this 'joint.' I'm going to stay around. We'd better get up a bit in case the josser in that 'bus is coming this way."

Suiting the action to the word, Red opened full out and commenced to climb, and, although the plane was heavily loaded, it made a fair showing. After getting up 2,000 feet higher, he eased up and throttled back again.

During the climb they had kept their eyes glued on Ostend, and now they were surprised to see another red light, answered from the ground in the same way as the first one.

Pulling the throttle back, Red shouted to Teddy:

"It's a rum go. That makes two lights and there may be some more. We'll stay right here. With a couple of Huns flying around, they won't be able to distinguish us at all, especially as they are several thousand feet below us. I'm going to turn toward Ghistelles. You just keep an eye open for more signals, and time 'em from the last, if possible."

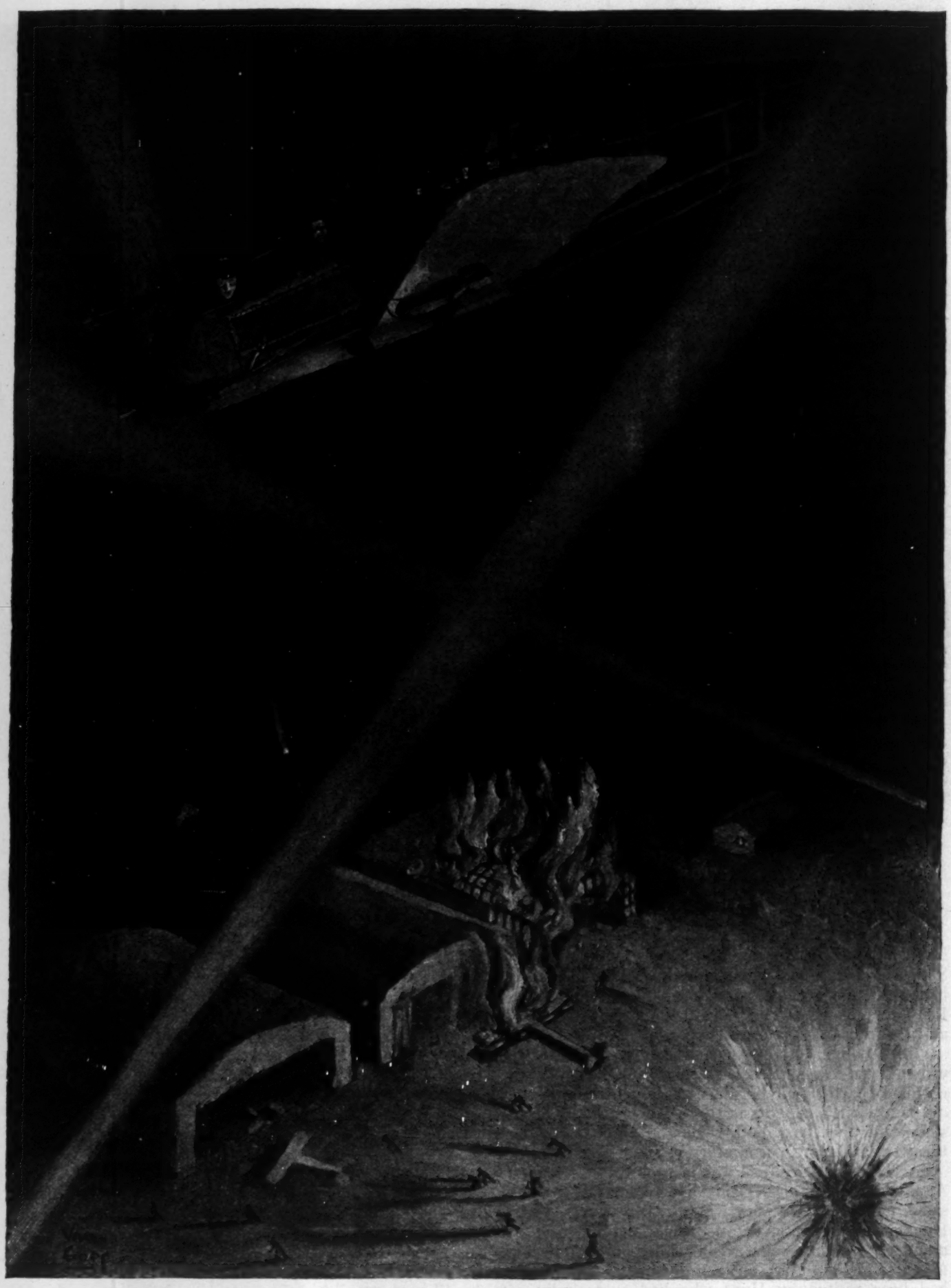
"Righto," and, waving his hand, Teddy gave himself up to the task of watching Ostend again, while Red turned the 'bus toward Ghistelles, carefully keeping an eye to either side.

They Discover Hun Signals

AT intervals of about two minutes, Teddy reported three more lights, each one answered from the ground and the last one answered by five long flashes. Several minutes passed and no more lights appeared.

After a time, Red switched completely off, and turned to Teddy.

"Listen here," he said. "I figure it is just the kind of night London gets it, judging by the last few, and I reckon those lights are signals from the Huns coming back after another show there. They must be flying to Bruges or out this way. We are higher up than they are,



The flames from the burning airplane on the ground revealed the hangars plainly and figures of men could be seen running about endeavoring to find cover. Elated by the success of their first dive, Red and Teddy turned and tore down on this group while the frantically sweeping searchlights sought vainly to catch them

and the southerly route is a better one for them. We are about four miles from Ghistelles, if I have figured right, so they are pretty near us now."

"Fine," said Teddy. "What next?"

"Nothing, until we know. There's just the chance, so keep your eyes skinned."

Despite their sharp lookout all the way to Ghistelles, nothing could be seen of the Huns, and Red and Teddy both began to think they were on a wild goose chase. Also, they were between the moon and any planes that might be coming from Ostend, thus giving the Huns a good chance to see them if they came near.

Four Gotha Planes Are Sighted

WHEN they were right over the town, Teddy suddenly stiffened up and, turning to Red, pointed downward. Getting into a bank, Red looked down and beheld a plane sneaking along about 2,000 feet lower, following the railway line toward Thourout. Shutting off again, Red commenced to circle around in a very gradual spiral, watching the Hun with fascinated eyes, for he had easily made out that the plane was a Gotha.

Opening up sufficiently to keep height, Red stayed on the slight bank, and, in a few minutes, along came two more Gothas, following exactly the same course. No more appeared in the next five minutes, and Red, suddenly straightening and heading in the same direction as the Huns, yelled out:

"The other two must have gone ahead. I'm going to follow on."

As far as the moon and observation from the Huns were concerned, the position was now reversed, much to Red's satisfaction, and, with his nose down slightly, he streaked off toward Thourout, both he and Teddy straining their eyes until they caught sight of the last Gotha. They were still a bit higher than the Huns, and now and again they could see the belch of the exhausts from the twin engines in front of them. Red naturally had his lights off, but he had to chance any signaling that might go on between the Huns, who now had their navigation lights on, and the ground.

Easing down to the same height as the enemy planes, Red and Teddy joined the procession, both taking it, without any discussion, as the natural thing to do.

Near Thourout they had their first fright. A pencil searchlight suddenly shot up in the sky, remaining rigid, and then both observed the first Gotha fly through the beam, at the same time shooting out a red light.

For an agonizing minute, Red wondered if every plane would have to signal thus or whether the leader's light would be taken as the O.K. His query was soon answered, for the second Gotha followed the leader's tactics to the letter.

"Turn right out, Red, and run parallel past the beam," shrieked out Teddy.

Red turned, flattened and then dived out a slight way, getting speed for a terrific zoom up, which brought him out a few hundred feet higher than the last Hun. Turning out again, Red watched the searchlight until the fourth Gotha had passed through, and then, judging the distance of the last plane from the beam to be about right, pushed the nose down and with full engine swooped down till he was almost alongside the Hun. There was little danger of being seen from the enemy airplane, because of the searchlight which blinded the crew for the time being. The real danger would come when the light went out, leaving the red glow from the Hun's signal floating around.

As the Gotha went through the beam, Red swept past just outside, with his engine shut down. The red light burst out and for a moment it appeared as if nothing could prevent them being discovered. However, the Huns were probably still blinded by the bright light, as nothing happened. And, scarcely daring to breathe, Red dropped back to his former position.

East of Thourout there is a large railway junction and east of this a large wood, over which the Gothas turned, heading toward Wynghene.

Teddy busied himself with his gun and its mounting. When he had finished, he shouted to Red:

"I've fixed the gun permanently in the front clip, so that it can't jump out. All the gun work will have to be done from the straight dive, same as usual."

"Right. We are losing height all the time, Teddy, and we can't be a long way off from their airdrome."

Wynghene was passed and then the small village of Lootenhulle, when the Gothas turned in the direction of Nevele. From this town another searchlight sprang up, but immediately went out when the first 'bus signaled.

It was now clear to both of them that the Huns' destination was Denis-St.-Westrem, a very well-known Gotha lair, and the scene of many of our night raids. It was so well guarded, however, that few of us had ever been able to do any real damage to the place. At this airdrome the Germans worked a peculiar system of lighthouse signaling to their night airplanes, consisting of green flaming-onions, which were sent up in a series of shorts and longs, usually three shorts, then a pause, followed by two longs. This signal was operating now, having a rather weird aspect from the air.

Red and Teddy Follow the Gothas

A WHITE and then a red light jumped out from the leading Gotha and in a flash the ground flares at the airdrome lit up. The Huns here worked the ground lights by electricity, the formation being in the shape of a huge arrow, indicating the direction for landing. Two small beams then flashed along the flares, making a perfect night landing table.

Shaking with excitement, Red and Teddy watched the proceedings. It was not often such a sight was had of an enemy airdrome in operation.

Red beckoned, and Teddy leaned toward him.

"We'd better wait for four of the blighters to land before we do anything, Teddy, otherwise they will get up in the air again and we shall lose them. I'll follow the last one around and when he dips for the lights, we'll let go. You try to get him while I loose off the big 'uns underneath. Bound to be a lot of trouble when we start, so be slick. We have got to come back across again to get the machines up against the hangars. You spray the openings and I'll let them have the small bombs, four of 'em. We'll keep the last two for the hangars, and I'll fly right down over them and then barge for home. Whatever you do, leave the Zep shed alone. It's too far out for us to touch."

Keeping as near as they dared to the last Gotha, Red and Teddy watched the first three get down. As the fourth machine loomed into the light from the ground flares and the last one was preparing to glide in, Red swerved out, then turned again with his nose up wind.

Like a streak of lightning, the 'bus dived down, straight as a die for the flares, with Red and Teddy mad with excitement, yelling and screaming like maniacs, although neither one could hear the other.

The fourth Gotha was down on the ground, making a beautiful target in the lights, while the last one could be seen just edging into the rear of the arrow. Grasping the two big bomb releases, Red pulled. One stuck, but the other worked properly, sending down two-hundred-

and-fifty pounds of death on the unsuspecting Germans below, who were probably thinking just then of a good hot meal after their hard night over London.

The bomb fell just alongside the fourth machine, and burst with a terrible explosion, sending a ruddy glare over the whole airdrome and vividly lighting it up for a moment. The Gotha was completely wiped out and spread about in fragments. Pulling frantically at the stuck release Red swore. It would not go through, and at last he gave it up in disgust.

The Enemy's Airdrome Is Wrecked

TEDDY, meanwhile, had been spraying the last machine with tracers and bullets, and with an awful lurch it toppled over on its side and crashed to the ground, catching on fire after it fell.

Pulling up, they tore across the airdrome a mean one hundred and fifty feet up. With a dizzy climbing turn they were around and heading again across the airdrome, this time in a diagonal direction, toward the far end of the hangars.

Everything below was now a raging pandemonium. Machine guns and searchlights were playing around in a wild manner, trying to locate this terrible demon who was dealing out, in such an effective manner, the same treatment the Huns had shortly before been giving the non-combatants of London.

The flames from the burning airplane on the ground revealed the hangars plainly, and figures of men could be seen running about endeavoring to find cover. Huddled up against the hangar doors were several airplanes.

Elated by the success of their first dive, Red and Teddy tore down on this group, Teddy spraying everything in sight of his gun with bullets, and completely stopping the two moving machines. Grasping the wing rack releases, Red let off four of the light bombs, right in the center of the group in front of the hangars, putting them clean out of action.

At this moment a searchlight caught and followed them. A perfect stream of machine gun bullets surrounded the 'bus. Red had no time to attempt to dodge out of the deadly glare. Yelling blue murder, he hoicked his machine around, and went straight at the light, Teddy blazing off right into the heart of the lens. Out went the light, and Red next located the machine gun that had been giving the most trouble.

Teddy put a whole drum of ammunition into the spot where the machine gun tracers could be seen spurting up, completely silencing it. Then he pointed hysterically toward the hangars.

"Get at 'em, Red, get at 'em!" he yelled.

Red couldn't hear, but he knew what Ted meant. Although the 'bus had been riddled in a dozen places, he turned toward the hangars, Teddy crashing on a new drum of ammunition as he turned.

Meanwhile two more lights had found and held them, but, not caring, Red kept to his course, his face tense, his body rigid. Fetching up at the far end of the hangars, he banked, turned and started on the last mad streak back.

As the first two hangars flashed toward him he let go the two remaining small bombs, and then, in a last hope, pulled the release of the stuck two-hundred-and-fifty pounder. Wonder of wonders! It gave, and down the bomb hurtled! With a terrific roar the three exploded, and in a flash one end of the set of hangars was blazing away fiercely.

Holding down to it, Red kept on and Teddy sent his stream of venom into some small buildings at the end of the hangars, which were probably officers' quarters.

It was some time before either of them realized that they were over and past the scene, and Teddy was still automatically holding the trigger of his Lewis, although the drum was long ago empty.

Behind them was a scene of appalling destruction. What had been, less than five minutes before, a quiet, well-organized airdrome was now a blazing ruin, with dead and dying lying about, while those left unhurt were running around dazed and terrified.

Every one of the hangars, seven in number, together with their contents, were blazing furiously, well past saving. Out on the airdrome the last Gotha was still sending its livid flames upward, and dotted about near the hangar fronts were huge rents in the ground where the four light bombs had dropped. Right in the middle of the field, upsetting the whole of the flare system, was a mammoth hole where the big bomb had hit. It would be days and days before any airplane would take off from that place again.

In a little office a German officer was spluttering with rage over the telephone, telling the headquarters at Ghent what had happened and asking for all anti-aircraft stations to be on the lookout for the devil that had so suddenly appeared, and as suddenly disappeared.

Out west toward Nevele an airplane was whizzing along, tree-hopping its way toward the lines. The plane was literally like a sieve from bullets and the occupants, Red and Teddy, although miraculously not touched, were tired from the strain.

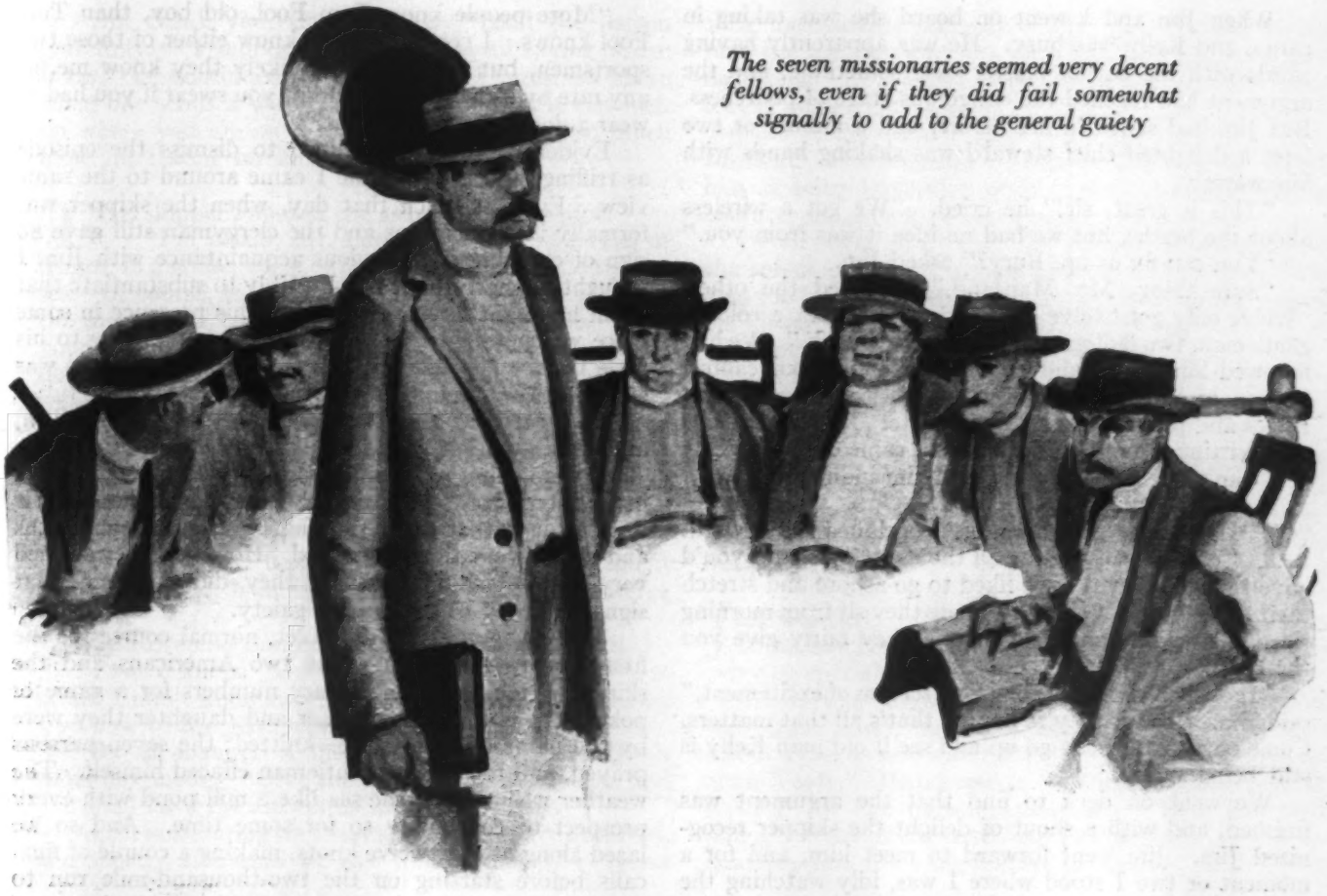
They had a hard journey before them, and they realized that the whole German anti-aircraft service would be warned of their coming in that sector.

However, as we know, they got through all right.

Just a few words of what happened afterward.

The "Old Man" recommended them both for decorations and saw that they got them, together with a week's special leave, which to their minds was much more important than any medal.

Two nights later they were both in London enjoying themselves. Four out of the seven nights they were there were ideal for night raids. Everybody was wondering why the Huns did not come. Red and Teddy just smiled—and said nothing.



The seven missionaries seemed very decent fellows, even if they did fail somewhat signally to add to the general gaiety

The Seven Missionaries

Jim Maitland Encounters Modern Pirates Aboard the "Andaman"

By Major H. C. McNeile

Illustrations by G. W. Gage

IT never really got much beyond the rumor stage—Captain James Kelly of the S. S. *Andaman* saw to that. It wouldn't have done him any good, or his line, and since England was troubled with railway strikes and war scares at Agadir, things which happened on the other side of the globe were apt to be crowded out of the newspapers.

But he couldn't stop the rumors, and "Our Special Correspondent" in Colombo made out quite a fair story for his paper at home. It didn't appear; seemingly the editor thought the poor devil had taken to drink and was raving. In fact, all that did appear in the papers were two short and apparently disconnected notices. The first ran somewhat as follows, and was found under the Shipping Intelligence:

"The S. S. *Andaman* arrived yesterday at Colombo. She remained to carry out repairs to her wireless, and will leave tomorrow for Plymouth."

And the second appeared some two or three months after:

"No news has yet been heard of the S. Y. *Firefly*, which left Colombo some months ago for an extensive cruise in the Indian Ocean. It is feared that she may have foundered with all hands in one of the recent gales."

But she didn't—the sea was as calm as the proverbial duck pond when the S. Y. *Firefly* went down in a thousand fathoms of water not far from the Cocos Islands. And but for the grace of Heaven and Jim Maitland that fate would have overtaken the good *Andaman* instead.

And so for your eyes only, Mrs. Jim, I will put down the real facts of the case. For your eyes only, I say, because I'm not absolutely sure that legally speaking he was quite justified.

THE S. S. *Andaman* was a vessel of some three thousand tons. She was in reality a cargo boat carrying passengers, in that passengers were the secondary consideration. There was only one class, and the accommodation was sufficient for about thirty people. Twelve knots was her maximum speed, and she quivered like jelly if you tried to get more out of her. And last, but not least, Captain James Kelly had been her skipper for ten years, and loved her with the love only given to men who go down to the sea in ships.

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When Jim and I went on board she was taking in cargo, and Kelly was busy. He was apparently having words with the harbor master over something, and the argument had reached the dangerous stage of politeness. But Jim had sailed in her before, and a minute or two later a delighted chief steward was shaking hands with him warmly.

"This is great, sir!" he cried. "We got a wireless about the berths, but we had no idea it was from you."

"You can fix us up, Bury?" asked Jim.

"Sure thing, Mr. Maitland," answered the other. "We've only got twelve on board: two Yanks, a colored gentleman, two ladies and a missionary bunch." We had followed him below and he was showing us our cabins. "Seven of 'em, sir," he went on, "with two crates of Bibles and prayer books, all complete. Maybe you saw them sitting around on deck as you came on board."

"Can't say I did, Bury," said Jim indifferently.

"THEY never go ashore, sir," continued the steward. "We've been making all the usual calls, and you'd have thought they'd have liked to go ashore and stretch their legs—but they didn't. There they sit from morning till night reading and praying, till they fairly give you the hump."

"It doesn't sound like one long scream of excitement," said Jim. "But if they're happy, that's all that matters. Come on, Dick. Let's go up and see if old man Kelly is still being polite."

We went on deck to find that the argument was finished, and with a shout of delight the skipper recognized Jim. Jim went forward to meet him, and for a moment or two I stood where I was, idly watching the scene on the quay. And then quite distinctly I heard a voice from behind me say, "By God! It's Jim Maitland." Now as a remark it was so ordinary when Jim was about that I never gave it a thought. In that part of the world one heard it, or its equivalent, whenever one entered a hotel or even a railway carriage.

And so, as I say, I didn't give it a thought for a moment or two, until Jim's voice hailed me, and I turned around to be introduced to the skipper. It was then that I noticed two benevolent-looking clergymen seated close to me in two deck chairs. Their eyes were fixed on the skipper and on Jim, while two open Bibles adorned their knees. Not another soul was in sight; there was not the slightest doubt in my mind that it was one of them who had spoken. And as I stood talking with the skipper and Jim my mind was subconsciously working.

There was no reason, of course, why a missionary should not recognize Jim, but somehow or other one does not expect a devout man with a Bible lying open on his knee to invoke the name of the Almighty quite so glibly. If he had said "Dear me!" or "Good gracious!" it would have been different. But the other came as almost a shock. However, the matter was a small one, and probably I should have dismissed it from my mind, but for the sequel a minute or two later. The skipper was called away on some matter, and Jim and I strolled back past the two parsons. They both looked up at us with mild interest as we passed, but neither of them gave the faintest sign of recognition.

NOW that *did* strike me as strange. A clergyman may swear if he likes, but why in the name of fortune he should utterly ignore a man whom he evidently knew was beyond me.

"Come and lean over the side, Jim," I said, when we were out of earshot. "I want to tell you something funny. Only don't look around."

He listened in silence, and when I ended he said:

"More people know Tom Fool, old boy, than Tom Fool knows. I certainly don't know either of those two sportsmen, but it's more than likely they know me, at any rate by sight. And wouldn't you swear if you had to wear a dog collar in this heat?"

Evidently Jim was inclined to dismiss the episode as trifling, and after a time I came around to the same view. Even at lunch that day, when the skipper was formally introducing us and the clergyman still gave no sign of claiming any previous acquaintance with Jim, I thought no more about it. Possibly to substantiate that claim he might have had to admit his presence in some place which would take a bit of explaining away to his little flock. For the man whose voice I had heard was evidently the shining light of the bunch.

He turned out to be the Reverend Samuel Longfellow, and his destination, as that of all the others, was Colombo. They were going to open a missionary house somewhere in the interior of Ceylon, and run it on novel lines of their own. But at that point Jim and I got out of our depths and the conversation languished. However, they seemed very decent fellows, even if they did fail somewhat signally to add to the general gaiety.

The voyage pursued its quiet, normal course for the first four or five days. The two Americans and the skipper made up the necessary numbers for a game of poker; the two ladies—mother and daughter they were by the name of Armstrong—knitted; the seven parsons prayed, and the colored gentleman effaced himself. The weather was perfect; the sea like a mill pond with every prospect of continuing so for some time. And so we lazed along at our twelve knots, making a couple of final calls before starting on the two-thousand-mile run to Colombo.

IT was the first night out on the last stage that Jim and I were sitting talking with the skipper on the bridge. Occasionally the sharp, hissing crackle of the wireless installation broke the silence, and through the open door of the cabin we could see the operator working away in his shirt sleeves.

"I guess it's hard to begin to estimate what we sailors owe to Marconi for that invention," said Kelly thoughtfully. "Now that we've got it, it seems almost incredible to think how we got along without it. And what can I do for you, sir?"

An abrupt change in his tone made me look around to see the Reverend Samuel Longfellow standing diffidently behind us. He evidently felt that he was trespassing, for his voice was almost apologetic.

"Is it possible, captain, to send a message from your wireless?" he asked.

"Of course it is," answered Kelly. "You can hand in any message you like to the operator, and he'll send it for you."

"You see, I've never sent a message by wireless before," said the parson mildly, "and I wasn't quite sure what to do. Can you get an answer quickly?"

"Depends on whom you are sending it to and where he is."

"He's on a yacht somewhere in this neighborhood," answered the clergyman. "He is a missionary, like myself, whose health has broken down, and a kind philanthropist is taking him for a cruise to help him recover. I felt it would be so nice if I could speak to him, so to say—and hear from him, perhaps, how he is getting on."

"Quite," agreed the skipper gravely. "Well, Mr. Longfellow, there is nothing to prevent your speaking to him as much as you like. You just hand in your message to the operator whenever you want to, and he'll send down the answer to you as soon as he receives it."

"Oh, thank you, Captain Kelly," said the parson gratefully. "I suppose there's no way of saying where I am," he continued hesitatingly. "I mean on shore when one sends a wire the person who gets it can look up where you are on a map, and it makes it so much more interesting for him."

THE skipper knocked the ashes out of his pipe.

"I'm afraid, Mr. Longfellow," he remarked at length, in a stifled voice, "that you can't quite do that at sea. Of course, the position of the ship will be given on the message in terms of latitude and longitude. So if your friend goes to the navigating officer of this yacht, he'll be able to show him with a pin exactly where you were in the Indian Ocean when the message was sent."

"I see," said the clergyman. "How interesting! And then, if I tell him that we are moving straight toward Colombo at twelve knots an hour, my dear friend will be able to follow me in spirit all the way on the map."

The skipper choked slightly.

"Precisely, Mr. Longfellow. But I wouldn't call it twelve knots an hour if I were you. Just say—twelve knots."

The Reverend Samuel looked a little bewildered.

"Twelve knots. I see. Thank you so much. I'm afraid I don't know much about the sea. May I—may I go now to the gentleman who sends the messages?"

"By all manner of means," said Kelly, and Jim's shoulders shook. "Give the operator your message, and you shall have the answer as soon as it arrives."

Again murmuring his thanks, the missionary departed, and shortly afterward we saw him in earnest converse with the wireless operator. And that worthy, having read the message and scratched his head, stared a little dazedly at the Reverend Samuel Longfellow, obviously feeling some doubts as to his sanity. To be asked to dispatch to the world at large a message beginning "Dear Brother," and finishing "Yours in the church" struck him as being something which a self-respecting wireless operator should not be asked to do.

"Poor little bird," said the skipper thoughtfully, as the missionary went aft to join his companions, "I'm glad for his sake that he doesn't know what the bulk of our cargo is this trip. He wouldn't be able to sleep at night for fear of being made to walk the plank by pirates."

Jim looked up lazily.

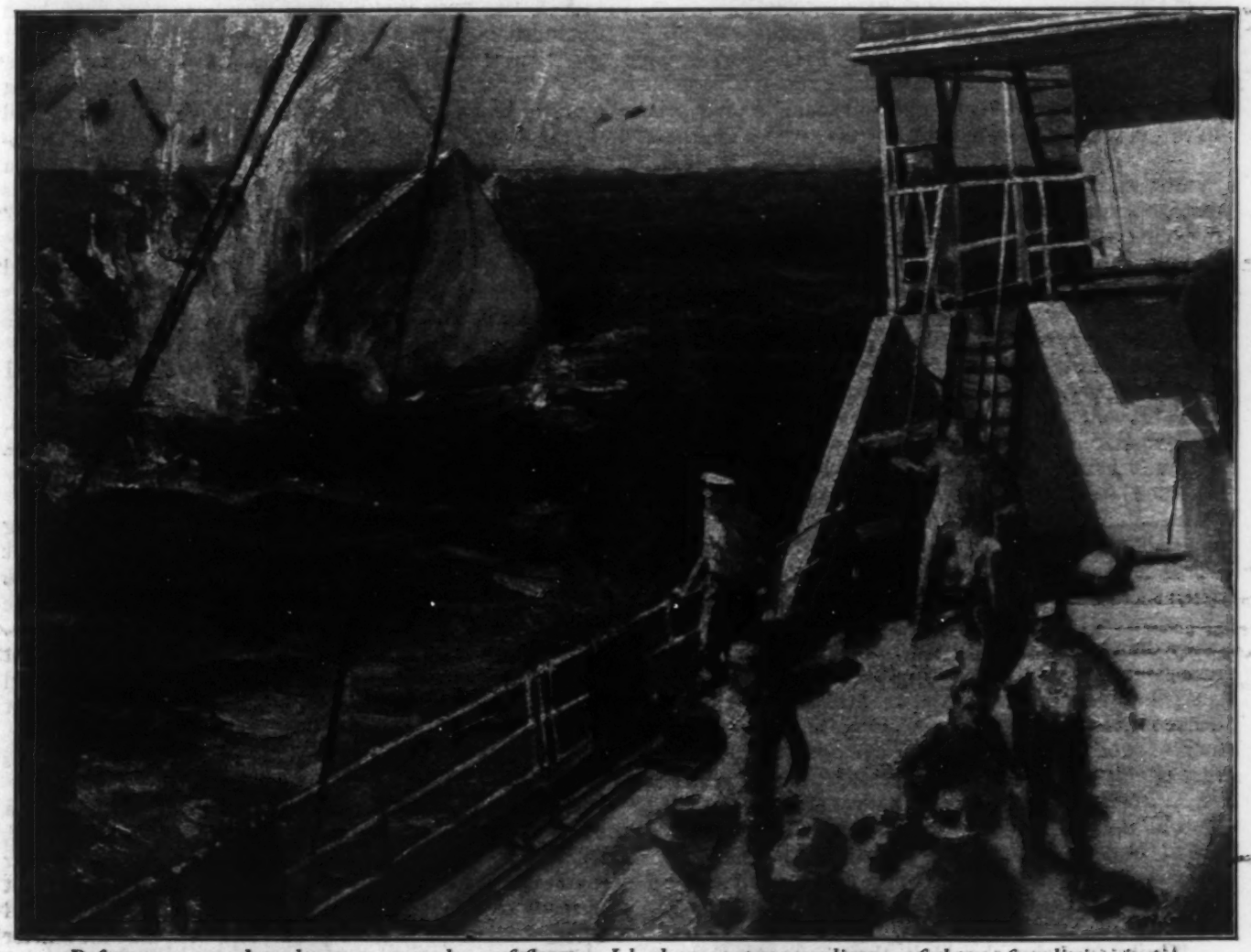
"Why, what have you got on board, old man?"

The skipper lowered his voice.

"I haven't shouted about it, Jim, and as a matter of fact I don't think the crew know. Don't pass it on, but we've got over half a million in gold below, to say nothing of a consignment of pearls worth certainly another quarter."

JIM whistled. "By Jove! It would be a nice haul for some one. Bit out of your line, isn't it, James—carrying specie?"

"Yes, it is," agreed the other. "It generally goes on the bigger boats, but there was some hitch this time. And it's just as safe with me as it is with them. That has made it safe." He pointed to the wireless operator busily sending out the parson's message. "That has made piracy a thing of the past. And incidentally, as you can imagine, Jim, it's a big feather in my cap, getting away



Before our eyes there burst a great sheet of flame. I had a momentary glimpse of the craft splitting in two

with this consignment. It's going to make the trip worth six ordinary ones to the firm, and—er—to me. And, with any luck, if things go all right, as I'm sure they will, I have hopes that in the future it will no longer be out of our line. We might get a share of that traffic, and I'll be able to buy that chicken farm in Dorsetshire earlier than I thought."

Jim laughed. "You old humbug, James! You'll never give up the sea."

The skipper sighed and stretched himself.

"Maybe not, lad; maybe not. Not till she gives me up, anyway. But chickens are nice companionable beasts they tell me, and Dorset is England."

WE continued talking for a few minutes longer, when a sudden and frenzied explosion of mirth came from the wireless operator. I had noticed him taking down a message, which he was now reading over to himself, and after a moment or two of unrestrained joy he came out on deck.

"What is it, Jenkins?" said the skipper.

"Message for the parson, sir," answered the operator. "There is a duplicate on the table."

He saluted, and went aft to find the Reverend Samuel.

"I think," murmured the skipper, with a twinkle in his eye, "that I will now inspect the wireless installation. Would you care to come with me?"

And this is what we, most reprehensibly, read:

Dear Brother how lovely the gentleman who guides our ship tells me we pass quite close about midday the day after tomorrow will lean over railings and wave pocket handkerchief.

FERDINAND.

"My sainted aunt!" spluttered the skipper. "'Lean over railings and wave pocket handkerchief!'"

"I think I prefer 'the gentleman who guides our ship,'" said Jim gravely. "Anyway, James, I shall borrow your telescope as we come abreast of Ferdinand. I'd just hate to miss him. Good night, old man. You'd better have that message framed."

It was about half an hour later that the door of my cabin opened and Jim entered abruptly. I was lying in my bunk smoking a final cigarette, and I looked at him in mild surprise. He was fully dressed, though I had seen him start to take off his clothes twenty minutes before, and he was looking grave.

"You pay attention, Dick," he said quietly, sitting down on the other bunk. "I had just taken off my coat when I remembered I'd left my cigar case in a niche up on deck. I went up to get it, and just as I was putting it in my pocket I heard my own name mentioned. Somewhat naturally I stopped to listen. And I distinctly heard this sentence—'Don't forget—you are absolutely responsible for Maitland.' I listened for about five minutes, but I couldn't catch anything else except a few disconnected words here and there, such as 'wireless' and 'midday.' Then there was a general pushing back of deck chairs, and those seven black-coated blighters trooped off to bed. They didn't see me; they were on the other side of the funnel—but it made me think. You remember that remark you heard as we came on board? Well, why the deuce is this bunch of parsons so infernally interested in me? I don't like it, Dick." He looked at me hard through his eyeglass. "Do you think they are parsons?"

I SAT up in bed with a jerk.

"What do you mean—do I think they're parsons? Of course they're parsons. Why shouldn't they be parsons?" But I suddenly felt very wide awake.

Jim thoughtfully lit a cigar.

"Quite so—why shouldn't they be? At the same time"—he paused and blew out a cloud of smoke—"Dick, I suppose I'm a suspicious bird, but this interest—this peculiar interest—in me is strange, to say the least of it. Of course it may be that they regard me as a particularly black soul to be plucked from the burning, in which case I ought to feel duly flattered. On the other hand, let us suppose for a second that they are not parsons. Well, I don't think I am being unduly conceited if I say that I have a fairly well-known reputation as a tough customer, if trouble occurs."

By this time all thoughts of sleep had left me.

"What do you mean, Jim?" I demanded.

He answered my question by another.

"Don't you think, Dick, that that radiograph was just a little *too* foolish to be quite genuine?"

"Well, it was genuine right enough. Jenkins took it down in front of our eyes."

"Oh, it was *sent;* I'm not denying that. And it was sent as he received it, and as we read it. But was it sent by a genuine parson, cruising in a genuine yacht for his health? If so, my opinion of the brains of the church drops below par. But if"—he drew deeply at his cigar—"if, Dick, it was not sent by a genuine parson, but by some one who wished to pose as the driveling idiot curate of fiction, why my opinion of the brains of the church remains at par."

"Look here," I said, lighting a cigarette, "I may be stupid, but I can't get you. Granting your latter supposition, why should any one not only want to pose as a parson when he isn't one, but also take the trouble to send fool messages around the universe?"

"HAS it occurred to you," said Jim quietly, "that two very useful pieces of information have been included in those two fool messages? First, our exact position at a given time, and our course and our speed. Secondly, the approximate time when the convalescing curate, in the yacht belonging to the kind friend, will impinge on that course. And the third fact—not contained in either message, but which may possibly have a bearing on things, is that on board this boat there is half a million in gold, and quarter of a million in pearls."

"Good heavens!" I muttered, staring at him foolishly.

"Mark you, Dick, I may have stumbled into a real first-class mare's nest. The Reverend Samuel and his pals may be all that they say and more, but I don't like this tender solicitude for my salvation."

"Are you going to say anything to the skipper?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered. "I think I shall tell James. But he's a pig-headed fellow, and he'll probably be darned rude about it. I should, if I were he. They aren't worrying over *his* salvation."

And with that he went to bed, leaving me thinking fairly acutely. Could there be anything in it? Could it be possible that any one would attempt piracy in the twentieth century, especially when the ship, as the skipper had pointed out, was equipped with wireless. The idea was ridiculous, and the next morning I went around to Jim's cabin to tell him so. It was empty, and there was a note lying on the bed addressed to me. It was brief and to the point:

I am ill in bed with a sharp dose of fever. Pass the good news on to our friend—the parson. JIM.

I did so, at breakfast, and I thought I detected a shade of relief pass over the face of the Reverend Samuel, though he inquired most solicitously about the sufferer and even went so far as to wish to give him some patent remedy of his own. But I assured him that quinine and quiet were all that were required, and with that the matter dropped.

Just then, with a squawk of terror like an anguished hen, Mrs. Armstrong rose to her feet and with her pink parasol in her hand fled toward the bow

And then there began for me a time of irritating suspense. Not a sign of Jim did I see for the whole of that day and the following night. His cabin door had been locked since I went in before breakfast, and I didn't even know whether he was inside or not. All I did know was that something was doing, and there are few things more annoying than being out of a game that you know is being played. Afterward I realized that it was unavoidable; but at the time I cursed inwardly and often.

AND the strange thing is that when the thing did occur it came with almost as much of a shock to me as if I had had no previous suspicions. It was the suddenness of it, I think—the suddenness and the absolute absence of any fuss or shouting. Naturally I didn't see the thing in its entirety; my outlook was limited to what happened to me and in my own vicinity.

I suppose it was about half-past eleven, and I was strolling up and down the deck. Midday had been the time mentioned, and I was feeling excited and restless. Mrs. Armstrong and her daughter were seated in their usual place, and I stopped and spoke a few words to them. Usually Mrs. Armstrong was the talker of the two—a big, gaunt woman with yellow spectacles, but pleasant and homely. This morning, however, the daughter answered—and her mother, who had put on a veil in addition to the spectacles, sat silently beside her.

"Poor mother has such a headache from the glare that she has had to put on a veil," she said. "I hope Mr. Maitland is better."

I murmured that he was about the same, just as two of the parsons strolled past and I wondered why the girl gave a little laugh. Then suddenly she sat up, with a cry of admiration.

"Oh, look at that lovely yacht!"

I swung around quickly, and there, sure enough, about a hundred yards from us and just coming into sight around the awning, was a small steam yacht, presumably the one from which Ferdinand was to wave. And at that moment the shorter of the two parsons put a revolver within an inch of my face, while the other one ran his hands over my pockets. It was so unexpected that I gaped at him foolishly, and even when I saw my Colt flung overboard I hardly realized that the big holdup had begun.

THEN there came a heavy thud from just above us, and I saw Jenkins, the wireless man, pitch forward on his face half in and half out of his cabin door. He lay there sprawling, while another of the parsons proceeded to wreck his instruments with the iron bar which he had used to stun the operator. Just then, with a squawk of terror like an anguished hen, Mrs. Armstrong rose to her feet, and with her pink parasol in one hand and her rug in the other fled toward the bow of the ship. She looked so irresistibly funny—this large, hysterical woman—that I couldn't help it, I laughed. And even the two determined-looking parsons smiled, though not for long.

"Go below," said one of them to Miss Armstrong. "Remain in your cabin. And you"—he turned to me—"go aft where the others are."

"You infernal scoundrel!" I shouted. "What are you playing at?"

"Don't argue, or I'll blow out your brains," he said quietly. "And get a move on."

I found the two Americans and the colored gentleman standing in a bunch with a few of the deck hands, and every one seemed equally dazed. One of the so-called parsons stood near with a revolver in each hand, but it was really an unnecessary precaution; we were none of us in a position to do anything. And suddenly one of the Americans gripped my arm.

"Gee! Look at the two guns on that yacht."

SURE enough, mounted fore and aft, and trained directly on us were two guns that looked to me to be of about three-inch calibre, and behind each of them stood two men.

"What's the game anyway?" he went on excitedly, as two boats shot away from the yacht. For the first time I noticed that the engines had stopped, and that we were lying motionless on the calm, oily sea. But my principal thoughts were centered on Jim. Where was he? What was he doing? Had these blackguards done away with him, or was he lying up somewhere—hidden away? And even if he was, what could he do? Those two guns had an unpleasant appearance.

A bunch of armed men came pouring over the side of the ship, and then disappeared below, only to come up again in a few minutes carrying a number of wooden boxes, which they lowered into the boats alongside. They worked with the efficiency of well-trained sailors, and I found myself cursing aloud. For I knew what was inside those boxes, and was so utterly helpless to do anything. And yet I couldn't help feeling a sort of unwilling admiration; the thing was so perfectly organized. It might have been a well-rehearsed drill, instead of a unique and gigantic piece of piracy.

I stepped back a few paces and looked up at the bridge. The skipper and his three officers were there—covered by another of the parsons. And the fifth member of the party was the Reverend Samuel Longfellow. He was smiling gently to himself, and as the last of the boxes was lowered over the side, he came to the edge of the bridge and addressed us.

"We are now going to leave you," he remarked suavely. "You are all unarmed, and I wish to give you a word of advice. Should either of the gunners on my yacht see any one move, however innocent the reason, before we are on board, he or both of them will open fire. So do not be tempted to have a shot at me, Captain Kelly, because it will be the last shot you ever have. You will now join your crew, if you please."

IN silence the skipper and his officers came down from the bridge, and the speaker followed them. For a moment or two he stood facing us with an ironical smile on his face.

"Your brother in the church thanks you for your little gift to his offertory box," he remarked. Then he turned to one of the other parsons beside him. "Is it set?" he asked briefly.

"Yes," said the other. "We'd better hurry. What about that woman up there?"

"Confound the woman!" answered the Reverend Samuel. "A pleasant journey, Captain Kelly."

He stepped down the gangway into the second boat, and was pulled away toward the yacht. And, feeling almost sick with rage, I glanced at the skipper beside me. Poor devil! What he must be feeling, I hardly dared to think. To be held up on the High Seas and robbed of specie and pearls the first time he was carrying them was cruel luck. And I was prepared to see anything on his face, save what I did see. For he was staring at the bow of the ship, with a fierce blazing excitement in his eyes, and instinctively I looked too, though every one else was staring at the yacht.

And then for the first time I remembered Mrs. Armstrong. She was cowering down with her hands over her ears—the picture of abject terror. But now curiosity overcame her fright, and she knelt there, staring at the yacht. Her pink parasol was clutched in her hands; and tragic though the situation was, I could not help smiling involuntarily. Anyway, she would have something to talk about when she got home.

A mocking shout from the yacht made me look away again. The scoundrel who called himself the Reverend Samuel Longfellow was standing beside the boxes of gold and pearls which had been stacked on the deck. He was waving his hand and bowing ironically, with the six other blackguards beside him, when the last amazing development took place.

Literally before our eyes they vanished in a great sheet of flame. I had a momentary glimpse of the yacht apparently splitting in two, and then the roar of a gigantic explosion nearly deafened me.

"Get under cover!" yelled the skipper, and there was a general stampede, as bits of metal and wood began falling into the sea all around us. Then there came another smaller explosion as the sea rushed into the yacht's engine room, a great column of water shot up, and when it subsided the yacht had disappeared.

"What in heaven's name happened?" said one of the Americans dazedly. "What made her blow up like that?"

I said nothing; I felt too dazed myself. And unconsciously I looked toward the bow: Mrs. Armstrong had disappeared.

THE skipper sent away a boat, but it was useless. There was a mass of floating wreckage, but no trace of any survivor, and after a while the search was given up. Just one of those unexplained mysteries which in this case could only be accounted for as Divine retribution.

So, at any rate, Mrs. Armstrong said to me when I met her on deck half an hour afterward.

"Dreadful! Terrible!" she cried. "How more than thankful I am that I didn't see it."

"You didn't see it?" I said, staring at her. "But surely——"

And then I heard Jim's voice behind me.

"Mrs. Armstrong, I have a dreadful confession to make. Mrs. Armstrong, Dick, was good enough to lend me some clothes this morning, so that we could have a rag when crossing the line—and I've gone and dropped her parasol overboard."

I admit it; I wasn't bright.

"We're nowhere near the line," I remarked, but fortunately the good lady paid no attention.

"What does it matter, Mr. Maitland?" she cried. "To think of anything of that sort in face of this awful tragedy! Though I must confess I think it served the villains right."

She walked away like an agitated hen, and Jim smiled grimly.

"Poor old soul," he said, "let's hope she never finds out what I really wanted her clothes for."

"So it was you up in the bow," I remarked.

He nodded. "Didn't you guess? Dick, I feel I've treated you rather scurvily. Let's go and have a drink, and I'll put you wise. I saw Kelly that night," he began, when we were comfortably settled, "and at first he laughed,

as I thought he would. Then after a while he didn't laugh quite so much, and later still he stopped laughing altogether. Finally I made a suggestion. If these men were what they said they were, the two big chests below, which common report had it were filled with Bibles, would prove their case. I suggested, therefore, that we examine these two chests. They would never know, and it would settle the matter. He took a bit of persuading, but finally we went below to where the passengers' luggage is stored. There were the two cases, and there and then we opened one. It was packed—not with Bibles—but with nitroglycerin."

Jim paused and took a drink, then lit a cigarette thoughtfully.

"I don't think that I have ever seen a man in quite such a dreadful rage as Kelly was," he went on gravely. "There was a clockwork mechanism which could be started by turning a screw on the outside of each box, and the whole diabolical plan was as clear as daylight. There was enough stuff there to sink a fleet of battleships, and when they had cleared off in the yacht with the gold we should suddenly have split in two and gone down with every soul on board. There would have been no one left to tell the tale, and these cold-blooded murderers would have got clean away. That was the little plot."

He smiled grimly.

"I had no small difficulty in preventing James from putting the whole bunch in irons on the spot, but finally I got him to agree to a plan of mine. We changed the cargo around—he and I. Their chests containing nitroglycerin we filled with gold; and the specie boxes we filled with nitroglycerin and some lead and iron as a make-weight. And then we let the plan proceed. We banked on a holdup and the wrecking of the wireless. We thought they'd send over a boatload of armed men, and transfer the stuff to the yacht—as in fact they did. Further, we banked on the fact that they wouldn't fool around with a fat, hysterical old woman, or a man in the throes of fever. Good girl—that Miss Armstrong; she kept her mother below all the morning in great style. And that, I think, is all," he ended, with a quizzical glance at me.

Curiosity had overcome Mrs. Armstrong's fright. She was kneeling in the bow staring at the yacht, her pink parasol clutched in her hands, and tragic though the situation was, I could not help smiling, involuntarily

"But it isn't!" I cried. "What made that stuff blow up, if it had been taken out of the boxes with the clockwork mechanism?"

"Well, old Dick," said Jim, "it may be that the Reverend Samuel kicked one of the boxes a trifle hard in his jubilation. Or perhaps he dropped his Corona inadvertently. Or maybe something hit one of those boxes very hard—like a bullet from a gun. Come down to my cabin," he added, suddenly.

I followed him and he shut the door. On the bed was lying Mrs. Armstrong's pink parasol. The muzzle of an Express rifle stuck out through a hole that had been split in the silk near the ferrule; the stock was hidden by the material. Jim took it out and cleaned it carefully. Then he looked at the parasol and smiled.

"Beyond repair, old man. And since I told the old dear I had dropped her gamp overboard—well——"

He rolled it up loosely and threw it far out through the porthole, then stood for a moment watching it drift.

Coming—Another Kind of Jim Maitland Adventure

IN his rambling progress homeward from the East, the hero of Major McNeile's fascinating stories takes a hand in "The Great Game"—the game that is played on behalf of the chancelleries of Europe by nameless adventurers to whom disguise and intrigue are second nature. And as Jim Maitland plays the game he encounters a gripping romance. Don't miss "The Rottenness of Lady Hounslow," in next month's McClure's.

Clouds of the new poison smoke as it will be used in the next war

The Truth About Poison Gas

"The Most Merciful and Powerful Weapon of Modern War"

Related by Gen. Amos A. Fries *to H. A. Mount*

POISON gas is forever outlawed! Universally condemned in public opinion, banned by many international treaties, its use was specifically renounced by resolution of the Washington Limitation of Armaments Conference on January 7th, 1922. The United States, Great Britain, Japan and France are signatories to this solemn agreement to prohibit the use in war of "asphyxiating, poisonous and other gases."

And yet, each of the four signers of this pact is going ahead, today, full tilt with the development of poison gas as a weapon! So is every other important nation on earth.

Why? *Because of the practical certainty that the next war will be fought with poison gas*—with devastating gas used on a scale we have never even imagined hitherto.

In spite of a very active public sentiment against it, in spite of all our statesmen have done or can do, that is the inescapable fact. And for this we have the word of no less an authority than Brigadier General Amos A. Fries, Chief of the Chemical Warfare Service, of the United States Army.

Facts That Must Be Faced

THE ban on gas in war was reaffirmed by the Washington armaments conference. But every perfume, dye or chemical plant in the land is a potential arsenal. And gas *will* be used in the next war. This startling article tells *why* the nations are preparing for chemical war, despite their agreement not to.

"The time has come to tell the truth about poison gas and chemical warfare," General Fries declared in an interview for McCLURE'S. "There has been too much hush-hushing, too much laying of fingers on lips. An overwhelming volume of evidence shows that if ever again our boys march off to war they will have to face poison gas and in quantities not even dreamed of in the late conflict. This is fact, not opinion, and to ignore it is simply to play the ostrich. Let us have the facts, then, and let us face them like men. After all, when we remove the mystery that now surrounds the subject, we dispel its terror, too. Chemical warfare is not so terrible as we have been led to believe."

The United States Chemical Warfare Service is one of our few special organizations born in the heat of the great conflict that has survived its end—a significant fact in itself. General Fries' office is a large, somewhat bare room which appropriately bears the earmarks of newness and incompleteness. The general works at a flat-topped desk, placed diagonally across one corner of

the room, and directly across the desk from him is a single chair for visitors. General Fries speaks with great earnestness. His dark eyes seem literally to snap as he drives home a point.

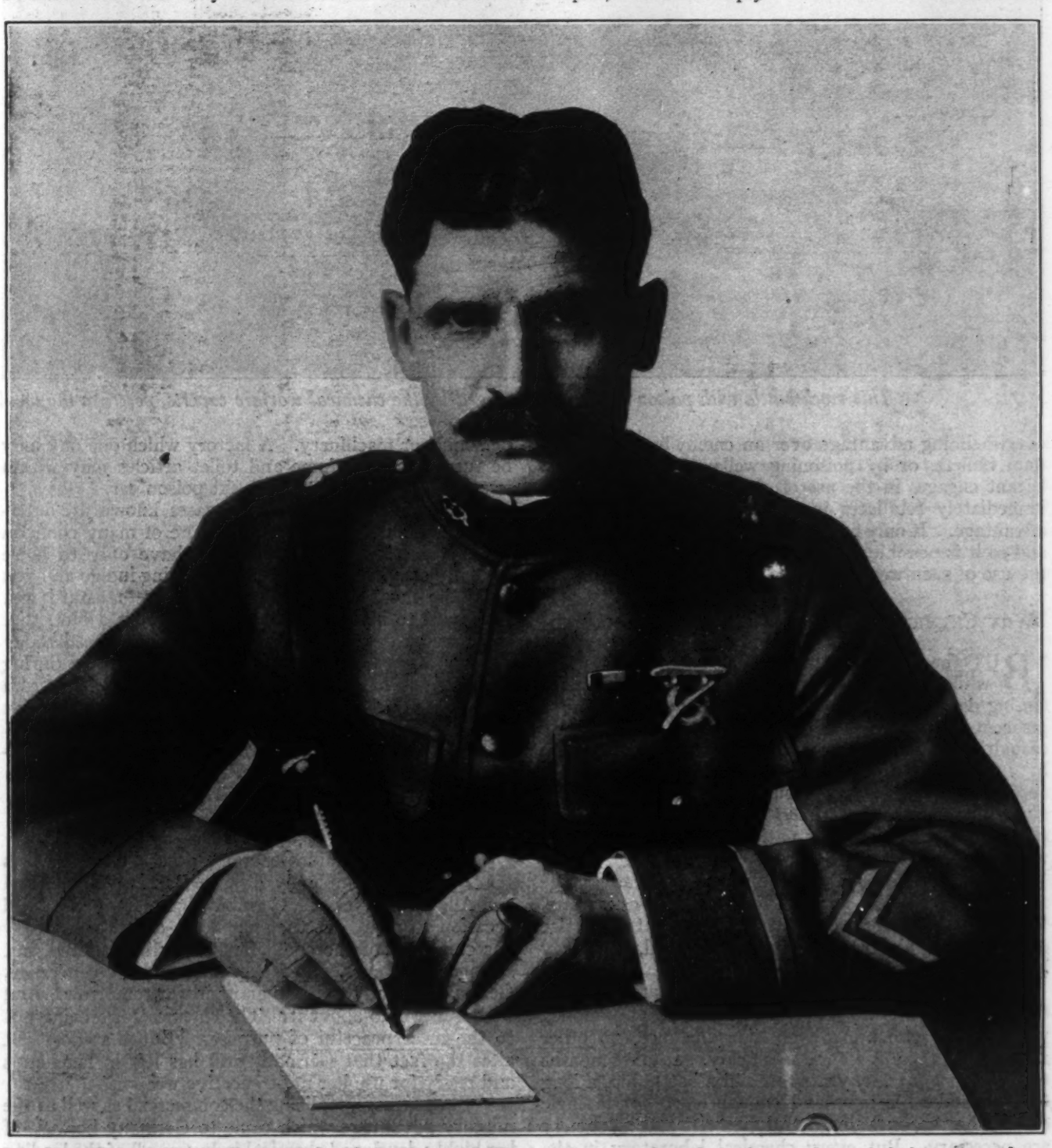
"In speaking to you on this subject," said General Fries, "I am treading on forbidden ground. The official position of the United States Government, and of this department, is that chemical warfare is a closed incident. We have agreed never again to engage in it. Why then do we continue to maintain this Chemical Warfare Service?

"I will tell you: it is because we dare not do otherwise. Knowing what we do about the use of chemicals in war, it would be indefensibly negligent to send an army into the field unprepared to defend itself against attack by poison gas. It would be more than that; it would be suicidal. Such an army would be foredoomed to defeat before a gun was fired. This service is for the purpose of developing and perfecting means of defense against gas attack.

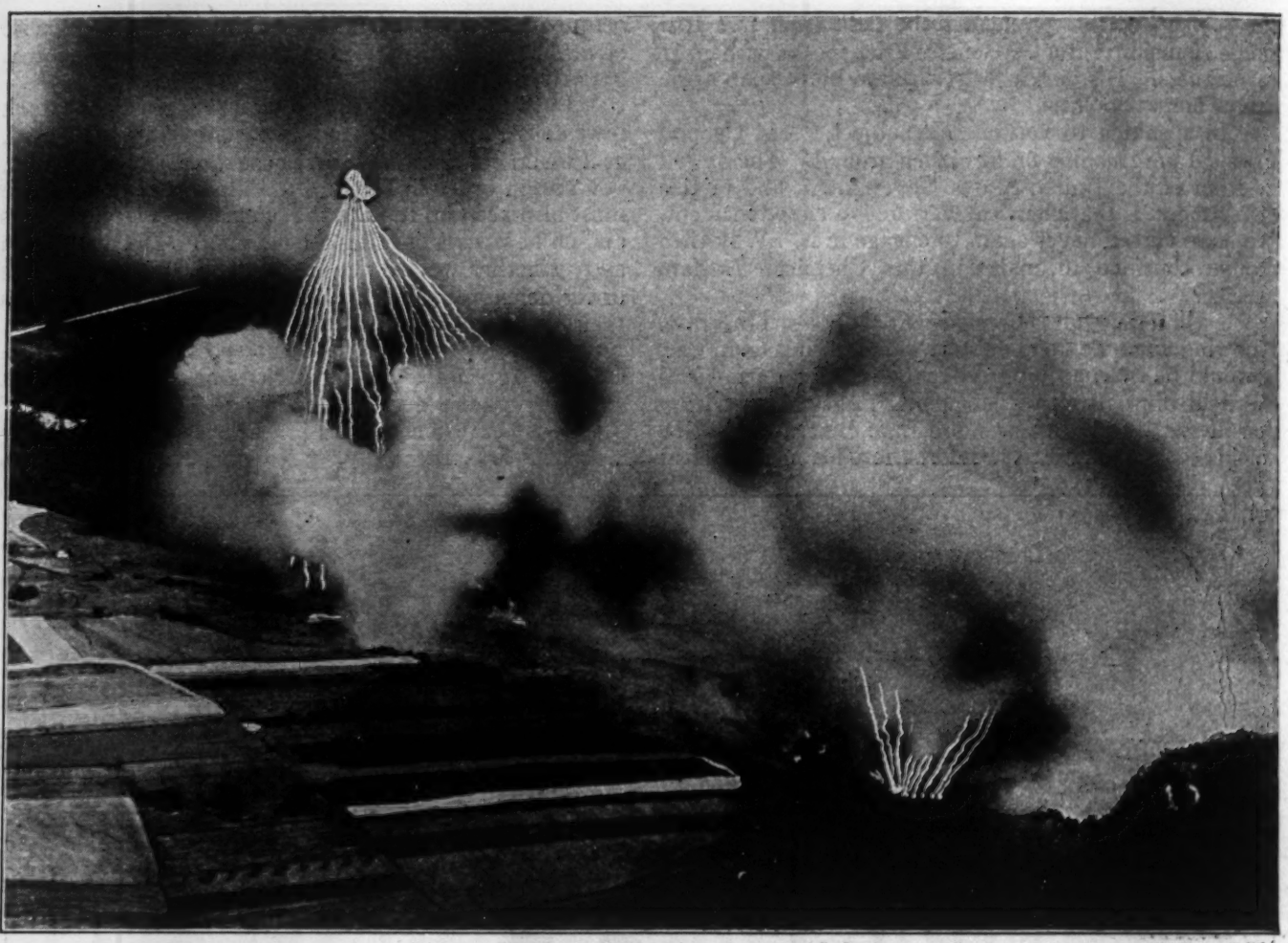
"But how can we devise protection against gas attack if we do not know what kinds of gas are likely to be used, or if we do not know *how* these gases are to be used? So, you see, in order to keep up to date in our defense, we must also keep up to date the offensive use of new gases and on new ways of using the old ones. The distinction as to whether we are developing poison gas for offense or for defense, upon which much stress is laid, becomes then a mere technicality."

"But why," I asked, "is it not possible to obtain an effective agreement among nations on poison gas, just as in the case of dumdum bullets and poisoned wells?"

"It is because chemicals in war are such an effective weapon," was the reply. "No one ever obtained an



Brig. Gen. Amos A. Fries, of the U. S. Chemical Warfare Service, who admits he treads on forbidden ground in this interview describing the nations' plans for future chemical warfare



This mock battle with poison gas, recently staged by the chemical warfare experts, portrays the local

overwhelming advantage over an enemy by using dumdum bullets, or by poisoning wells. When one combatant engages in the use of either of these, the other immediately retaliates in kind, and neither gains an advantage. It only makes battle more horrible for both, and so it is possible to get an agreement to refrain from the use of such weapons and such methods.

Why Chemical Warfare Cannot Be Abolished

"BUT the report of the surgeon general shows that while gas was used in great quantity only in the closing days of the war, it accounted for close to thirty per cent of the casualties reported in the A. E. F. By casualties, I mean the number of men put out of action by injuries great or small. No other single weapon accounted for so many casualties—not even the big guns. *Poison gas is the most effective weapon mankind has ever devised.* Will any nation, with its back to the wall, and fighting for its life, hesitate to use it?

"Poison gas does give an overwhelming advantage against an enemy unprepared for that form of warfare. We know almost for a certainty that a country the size of Norway could whip a nation like England, if Norway had poison gas and England had none.

"That is the chief reason why chemical warfare cannot be abolished as easily as dumdum bullets or poisoned wells. But there are others. For instance, no other arm can be prepared for use so quickly. It takes months to build a submarine, years to build a battleship, a long time to make big guns and enough shells for a single drive. For all of these, special factories and machinery are necessary. But every chemical laboratory in the land is a potential arsenal, with almost no change in personnel or machinery. A factory which one day may be turning out perfume and toilet articles may within twenty-four hours be turning out poison gas.

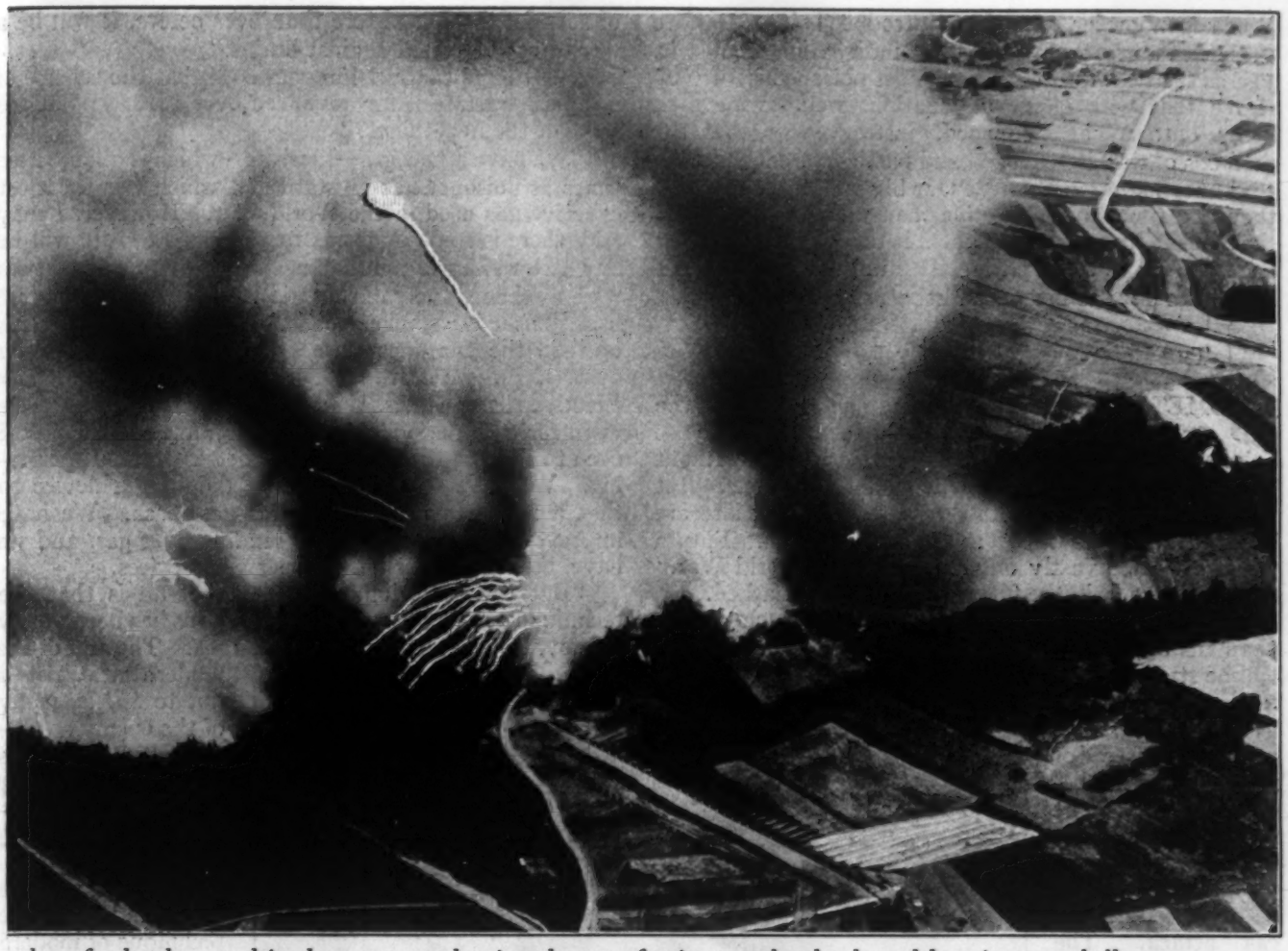
"The most effective poison gases known are intermediate products in the manufacture of many common dyes, cosmetics, and drugs. You have only to leave partially complete the process for making indigo and you have the most deadly of poison gases—mustard gas. It is hard to believe, but nevertheless it is a fact, that more poison gas is being manufactured and used today in the United States than was used at any time during the war. What nation, overrun by an enemy and having at hand such an effective and quickly available weapon, would hesitate to use it?"

"If that be the case," I said, "then chemical disarmament is practically impossible!"

Results of the Use of Poison Gas

"EXACTLY!" said General Fries. "Germany has been as completely disarmed as is possible, and yet Allied observers in Germany have frequently had occasion to point out that her great chemical industry has come out of the conflict not only unimpaired, but stronger than ever. So far as chemicals are concerned, Germany is ready to begin another war tomorrow. And what can we do about it? The chemicals are being put to the most peaceful of purposes. But that does not alter the fact that Germany still has left in her hands and ready for use her most effective weapon.

"Furthermore, realizing the commercial as well as the military advantage which came to Germany because of her highly developed chemical industry, all of the leading nations are making strenuous efforts to build up their



color of a battleground in the next war showing the use of poison smoke clouds and bursting gas shells

own chemical industries. This fact makes it increasingly certain that chemicals will be used in the next war.

"The most useful chemicals in battle, you know, are not new. They have been known and used in the laboratory for a long, long time. It is only their use as a weapon that is new."

"Suppose, then, that there is another war and poison gas is used, what will be the result?" I asked curiously.

"It will not be so terrible as most people suppose," replied General Fries. "I said that poison gas accounted for more than thirty per cent of all the casualties in the A. E. F., but of this number only about two per cent died. On the other hand, of approximately seventy per cent injured from bullets, high explosives, and all other weapons, more than twenty-eight per cent died.

"Neither does poison gas maim men for life as do so many of the other weapons. Of the gassed patients, four were blinded in both eyes, and twenty-five in one eye—a total of twenty-nine. These twenty-nine men were 3.85 per cent of the total number of those suffering blindness in one or both eyes from all causes. In other words, bullets, high explosives and other methods of warfare were responsible for twenty-five times as much blindness as gas. In addition, bullets and the like were the cause of the loss of parts of legs or arms of 4,403 of our soldiers, while 4,790 had the flexibility of one or more joints impaired. Gas does not cause such injuries. A very thorough study of gassed patients shows, furthermore, that there are practically no bad after-effects from being gassed."

"But," I protested, "what of the cases of weak lungs and tuberculosis among men who have been gassed?"

"That is one of the popular misconceptions about gas warfare," said General Fries. "The surgeon general's report shows that there were *almost twice as many* cases of tuberculosis for each thousand men among the rank and file of the army, than among the gassed patients. These cases have been followed up very closely since and there is no evidence at all that a man who has been gassed is left with weak lungs.

"That, like a great many other things the average man 'knows' about chemical warfare, is pure fiction. The fact is that chemicals provide not only the most effective weapon of modern war, *but the most humane weapon.* Why, the bloodiest battles that were ever fought in the history of the world, taking into consideration the number of dead as compared to the number of men engaged, were fought with swords and battle axes.

Gas Casualties in France

THE figures below, taken from the report of the Surgeon General of the United States Army, bear out General Fries' statement that poison gas is not only the most effective, but *the most humane weapon of modern warfare.*

Deaths in hospitals from gas	1,221
Total Gas Casualties in hospitals and field	75,767
Total of all casualties in hospitals and field	273,869
Percentage of casualties due to gas	27.6
Percentage of gas cases dying	1.5
Percentage of battle wounded dying	28.7

When gunpowder was first introduced into warfare there was a great wave of public indignation against it, just as there is a protest now against poison gas. It was feared that with gunpowder nations would wipe each other out. What happened, instead, was that the methods of warfare changed and battles were less deadly than they had been before. Our big guns are a hundred thousand times more effective than the swords used by the ancient Romans. But then, it takes over a hundred thousand times as much metal to kill a man now as it did in the days of personal combat.

The Probable Nature of Future Wars

"SOMETHING very like that is to be expected in the case of poison gas. It is true that if we were to use poison gas against an enemy unfamiliar with it or without protection against it, the results would be terrible. But what is happening is that the methods of warfare are being changed to meet this new condition. Future warfare will be vastly different from the World War."

"And what will the future war be like?" I asked.

"Well, for one thing, massed attacks such as the Germans used will have to be abandoned. Battle lines will be stretched out further and further. The fighting will be continuous instead of intermittent as before. Every effort will be made to avoid a concentration of troops which might be easy victims of a gas attack. The front-line battle area will be longer and deeper. Gases which remain on the spot on which they fall for days will be used. Therefore, it will be necessary not only to wear gas masks all the time, but to wear protective clothing, also.

"The battle will be carried on at night as well as by day, because night is the best time to fight with gas. Troops in the front battle area will have to be constantly on the alert. Experience has shown that the man who bears up best under this kind of warfare is the intellectual type. Giant physique will count for less than ever in war. The constant aim of the combatants will be to find new gases, which will penetrate the defenses of the enemy, or methods of surprise attack. More than ever before, it will be a war of brains pitted against brains."

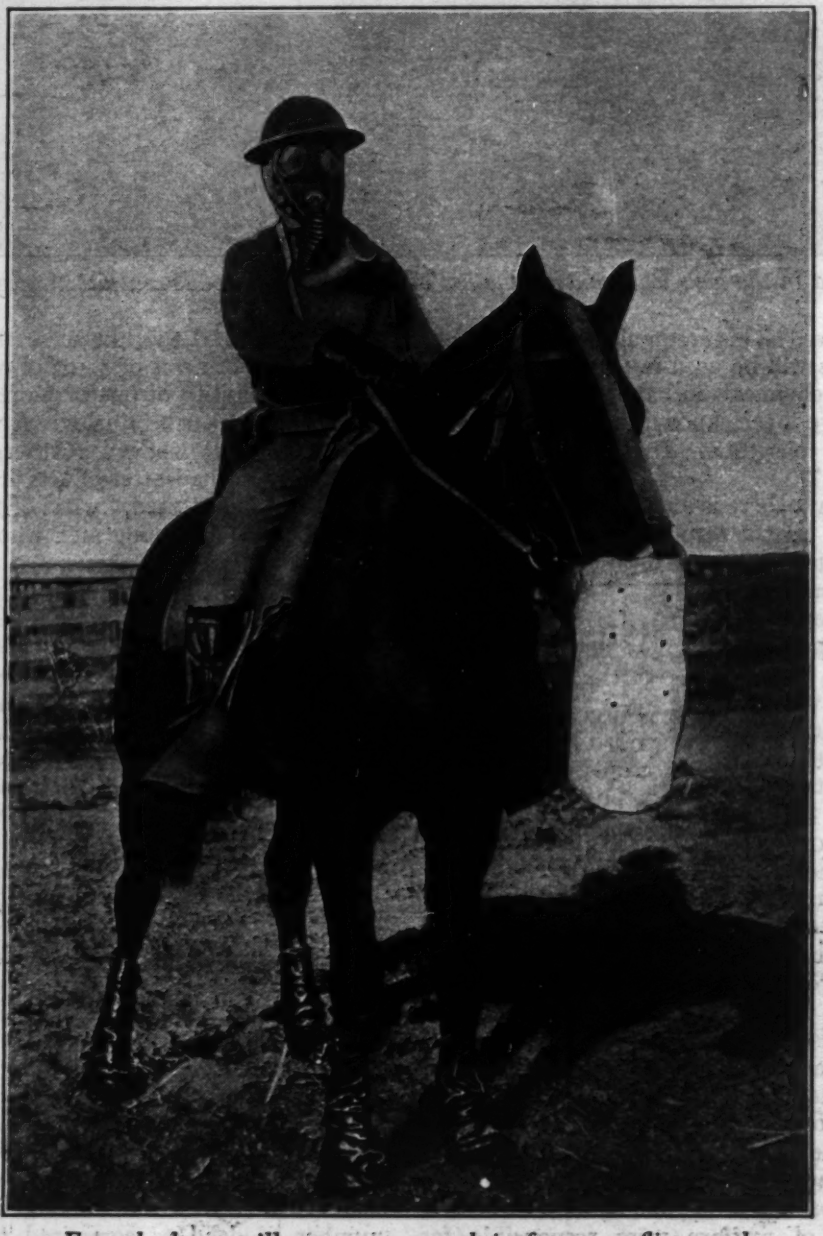
"You have said," I interrupted, "that the science of chemical warfare is far advanced over 1918. What are some of the new things?"

"We have a new gas—Lewisite—which is about three times as poisonous as mustard gas, which was the most effective gas used in the World War. However, I may add, there is some doubt as to whether Lewisite will be any better as a weapon than mustard gas. Smoke clouds were used effectively during the World War, but now we have *poisonous* smoke clouds. During the later days of 1918 the Germans were experimenting with poison dust. Now we have poison dust many times more effective than theirs. We have gas masks which can be worn for long periods without discomfort—it is possible even to sleep in them. We have better protective clothing. We have rigged up a little diaphragm device so that a man can *talk* through his gas mask. We have improved guns and shells for sending over gas, and we have, besides, a long list of other new devices.

"But the most important thing of all is that the technique of using these various weapons has been vastly improved over the closing days of 1918. The aim of the modern strategist is not to *kill* as many of the enemy as possible, but to put as many as possible out of action *without* killing them. There is no weapon so effective for this purpose as gas and the whole technique of modern battle is founded on that fact.

"There is another thing which we have not considered, and that is naval warfare. When the bombing tests were conducted off the Virginia capes, a great deal was said about the effectiveness of the big bombs, but almost nothing about the gas tests. As a matter of fact, it is the gas rather than the bombs which has naval men worried.

"A bomb must strike the ship directly or it must hit directly alongside to be effective. With gas shells, it is not necessary to be so accurate in order to create a great cloud of gas around the ship. The ship's own ventilating system picks up the gas and carries it down into the bowels of the vessel.



Even the horse will wear a gas mask in future conflicts, and protective coverings for his legs

Above, various types of anti-gas "armor" devised for our troops

At left, how the dogs of war will be masked for their part in the fray

"Of course the crew can put on gas masks and protective clothing, but that would so seriously hamper them that it is doubtful whether the big ships would be worth their salt in battle. If a nation on the defensive could so easily cripple an invading fleet, with the practical certainty that almost no one would be killed, who would hesitate to resort to gas?

"There is one recent development which I hope will help the public gain a better understanding of the real purpose of gas in warfare, and that is the use of tear and sneeze gases by police, hospitals and prison authorities in controlling mobs or fractious individuals. Of course there has been a howl about this, too, and some of our leading journals have called it cruel and barbarous. But certainly it is more humane to douse a mob with a little harmless gas, than to shoot at them."

"But war gases are not harmless," we ventured.

"Of course they aren't! And war is not child's play. I am not advocating war! And I do not believe that another world war is imminent, but I do say of chemical warfare, that if and when war does come again, we shall have to face these conditions beyond a shadow of a doubt. The sooner we all frankly recognize it, the better for the nation and the better for the world."

Mr. Edward Blackton Proves Past Master at the Game of Double Cross

The Third Round

By Major H. C. McNeile

Illustrations by Marshall Frantz

"I KNOW I'm being what?" barked the professor. "Who is following me?"

Drummond slightly raised his voice.

"If you turn around you will see an unpleasant specimen of humanity gazing into the basement of that house. I allude to the bird with the large ears, who is beginning to get a little red about the tonsils."

With a snarl the man swung on his heel and came toward them.

"Are you talking about me, confound you?" he said, addressing Drummond.

"I am," remarked Drummond dispassionately. "Mushrooms growing well down below there?" The man looked somewhat disconcerted. "Now, who told you to follow Professor Goodman?"

"I don't know what you're talking about," said the man surlily.

"Dear me!" remarked Drummond mildly. "I should have thought the question was sufficiently clear even to a person of your limited intelligence. However, if it will save you any bother, the professor is lunching with me at my club—that one over there with the warrior in uniform outside the door—and he will probably be leaving about three. So you can either run away and play marbles till then, or you can stay here and watch the door."

He put his hand through the professor's arm, and gently propelled him toward the club, leaving

"He's jolly well got to go!" Hugh said. "He's had a letter this morning threatening his life"

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the man scratching his head foolishly, utterly at sea.

"But, my dear fellow," mildly protested the professor, "this is very kind of you. I'd no idea I was lunching with you."

"No more had I," answered Hugh genially. "But I think it's a jolly sort of idea, don't you? We'll get a table in the window and watch our friend earning his pay outside, while we toy with a bit of elusive Stilton."

"But how do you know the man was following me, Drummond?" demanded the professor excitedly. "And if he was, don't you think I ought to tell the police?"

Gently, but firmly, Drummond piloted him up the steps of the club.

"I have an unerring instinct in such matters, professor," he remarked. "And he was very bad at it—very bad. Now we will lower a Martini apiece, and I will read this threatening missive of yours."

THE professor sank into a chair, and blinked at Hugh through his spectacles. He had had a trying morning, and there was something very reassuring about this large and imperturbable young man who he knew was his future son-in-law's greatest friend. And as he watched him reading the typewritten piece of paper strange stories which he had heard of some of Drummond's feats in the past came back to him. They had been told him by Algy and one or two by Brenda, but he had not paid any great attention to them at the time. They were not very much in his line, but now he felt distinctly comforted as he recalled them. To have his life threatened was a new experience for the worthy professor, and one not at all to his liking. It had interfered considerably with his work that morning, and produced a lack of mental concentration which he found most disturbing.

The letter was short and to the point:

"Unless you accept the two hundred and fifty thousand pounds recently offered to you, you will be killed."

The professor leaned forward as Drummond laid the sheet of paper on the table.

"I must explain, Drummond——" he began, but the other man interrupted him.

"No need to, professor. Algy came around to see me this morning, and he told me about your discovery." He again picked up the paper and glanced at it. "You have no idea, I suppose, who can have sent this?"

"None," said the professor. "It is utterly inconceivable that Sir Raymond Blantyre should have stooped to such a thing. As Algy probably told you, he is the man who originally offered me this sum to suppress my discovery. But I refuse to believe for a moment that he would ever have been guilty of such a vulgar threat."

Drummond regarded him thoughtfully.

"Look here, professor," he said at length, "it seems to me that you are getting into pretty deep water. How deep I don't quite know. I tell you frankly I can't understand this letter. If, as you say, it is merely a vulgar threat, it is a very stupid and dangerous thing to put on paper. If, on the other hand, it is more than a threat—if it is an actual statement of fact—it is even more incredibly stupid and dangerous."

"A statement of fact!" gasped the professor. "That I shall be killed if I don't suppress my discovery!"

He was blinking rapidly behind his spectacles, and Drummond smiled.

"A statement of fact as far as the writer of this epistle is concerned," he remarked. "No more than that, professor, I hope. In fact, we must take steps to insure that it is no more than that. But this letter—on top of your being followed—shows that you are in the public eye, so to speak."

"But I don't understand, Drummond," said the professor feebly.

"NO more do I," answered Hugh. "However, that will make it all the jollier when we do. And it is possible that we may get a bit nearer the mark today at lunch. A fellow of the name of Sinclair is joining us—he's a pal of Algy's, too—and he's in a big diamond merchant's office down in the city. He's a knowledgeable sort of bird, and we'll pump him. I don't want you to say a word as to your discovery—not a word. We'll just put the case to him as an academic one, and get his real opinion on it."

"But I know their opinion about it already," said the professor peevishly. "And I tell you that nothing is going to keep me from announcing my discovery in ten days before the Royal Society."

Drummond drained his cocktail.

"That's the spirit, professor!" he cried cheerily. "But for all that, we may just as well see where we are. Here is Sinclair now: don't forget—not a word." He rose as Toby Sinclair came up. "Morning, Toby. Do you know Professor Goodman? He is the misguided man who is allowing Algy to marry into his family."

"Morning, sir," said Sinclair, with a grin. "Well, old man—a cocktail, a rapid lunch, and I must buzz back. I tell you things are moving with some celerity in our line at present. And as the bright boy of the firm, my

THE STORY FROM THE BEGINNING

AMONG the snow-capped mountains of Switzerland Mr. Edward Blackton—known by various other names in the course of his eventful career—and the girl who is his constant companion are resting after a particularly unpleasant time in England. Their peace is interrupted by the appearance of two men—Sir Raymond Blantyre and Jabez Leibhaus, diamond magnates—who tell Blackton a strange story, and implore his aid.

According to them, Professor Goodman, a well-known chemist, had succeeded in producing by artificial means a diamond—absolutely perfect, flawless, worth a king's ransom—at a cost of less than six pounds! Realizing that the discovery, if revealed, will mean utter ruin to the diamond interests, Sir Raymond urges the professor not to disclose the secret, finally offering him two hundred and fifty thousand pounds for his silence. The professor refuses—and in desperation Blantyre appeals to Blackton to prevent the disclosure. Blackton agrees to help them, and leaves for England at once.

In England, meanwhile, Professor Goodman's daughter Brenda and her fiancé, Algy Longworth, are tremendously disappointed at this reckless refusal of a vast fortune for the sake of science and Algy appeals to his friend Hugh Drummond to influence the professor to accept the money and forego the glory. But Drummond realizes instantly that the affair is really serious and he promises to lend a hand.

Not long after his interview with Algy, Drummond meets the professor himself, who hands him an anonymous letter he has just received, in which his life is threatened. But Drummond, alert now, is more concerned in the fact that the professor is being followed.

time is fully occupied." He lit a cigarette, and Hugh laughed in disbelief, as he said:

"With a Lunar Guide and the Sportsman! Quite so, old boy—I know."

"No, really, Hugh," said Toby seriously, "the old office has not been the usual rest cure just lately. Strong men have rushed in and out and conferred behind locked doors, and the strain has been enormous. Made one quite dizzy to see them. However, it's been better the last two or three days, ever since old Blantyre came back from Switzerland."

Drummond adroitly kicked the professor's leg.

"And who is old Blantyre?" he remarked carelessly. "And why does he go to Switzerland?"

"SIR RAYMOND BLANTYRE is head of the syndicate to which our firm belongs, though why he went to Switzerland I haven't any idea. All I can tell you is that he went out there looking like nothing on earth, and came back two days later smiling all over his face."

"Speaks well for the Swiss air," said Hugh dryly. "However, let's go and inspect the menu."

He led the way toward the dining room, and his expression was thoughtful. If Sir Raymond Blantyre was now facing immediate ruin, as he had been given to understand, it was a little difficult to see why he should be smiling all over his face. It showed, at any rate, a resignation to Fate which was beyond all praise. Unless, of course, something had happened in Switzerland to—— But, then, what could have happened? Had he gone over there to dispose of his stock before the crash came? Hugh felt very vague as to whether it would be possible to do such a thing. Anyway, it mightn't be a bad idea to find out where he had been in Switzerland. Just for future reference, in case anything happened.

"Yes—a deuced good advertisement for the Swiss air, old man," he repeated, after they had sat down. "Where did he go?"

"You seem very interested in his wanderings," said Toby, with a laugh. "As a matter of fact, I believe he went to Montreux, but since he was only there a day, the air can't have had much to do with it."

Hugh glanced through the window; the man who had been following the professor was still loitering about the corner of the square. And the frown on his face grew more pronounced. It beat him—the whole thing beat him completely. Especially the threatening letter——

"You're marvelously merry and bright this morning, old boy." Toby broke off his desultory conversation with the professor and regarded Hugh with the eye of an expert. "I don't think you can have been mother's angel boy last night. Anyway, what is this important thing you wanted to see me about?"

WITH an effort his host pulled himself together.

"I was thinking, Toby," he remarked, "and you know what an awful effect that always has on my system. Look here, diamonds are a pretty good thing, aren't they, as a birthday present for Phyllis?"

Toby stared at him.

"I should think they're a very good thing," he remarked. "Why?"

"No danger of them losing their value?"

"None whatever. The output is far too carefully controlled for that."

"But supposing some one came along and manufactured them cheaply?"

Toby laughed. "You needn't worry about that, old man. It has been done in the past and the results cost more than the genuine article."

"Yes, but supposing it did happen," persisted Hugh. "Supposing a process was discovered by which big stones—really big stones could be made for a mere song—what then?"

Toby shrugged his shoulders.

"The discoverer of the process could ask practically what he liked to suppress it," he answered.

"And if it wasn't suppressed—if it became known?"

"If it became widely known it would mean absolute ruin to thousands of people. You may take it from me, old man, that in the first place such a process is never likely to be found, and, if it ever was, that it would never come out."

Hugh flashed a warning glance at the professor.

"There are hundreds of millions of pounds involved directly or indirectly in the diamond business," went on Toby. "So I think you can safely invest in a few for Phyllis." He glanced at his watch and rose. "Look here, I must be toddling. Another conference on this afternoon. If you want my advice on choosing them, old boy, I'm always in the office from eleven-thirty to twelve."

Hugh watched him cross the room; then he turned thoughtfully to the professor.

"So that's that," he said. "Now, what about a bit of Stilton and a glass of light port while we consider the matter?"

"But I knew all that before, and it has no influence on me, Drummond. None at all." The professor was snorting angrily. "I will not be intimidated into the suppression of a far-reaching chemical discovery by any considerations whatever."

"Quite so," murmured Hugh soothingly. "I thought you'd probably feel like that about it. But it's really Algy I'm thinking about. As you know, he's a dear old pal of mine; his wedding is fixed in about a month, and since that is the only thing that can possibly restore him to sanity none of us want it postponed."

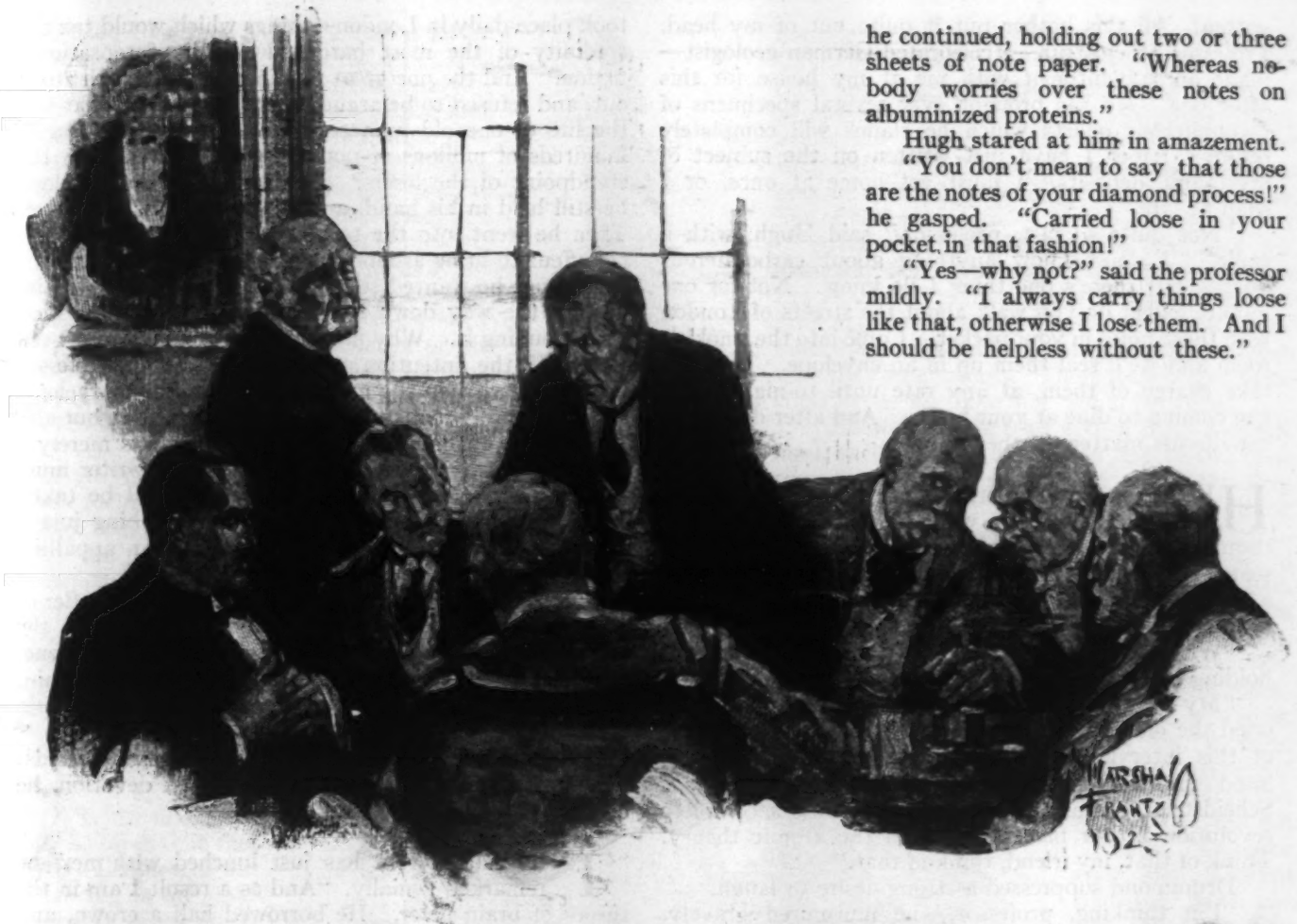
"WHY should it be postponed?" cried the professor.

"Mourning in the bride's family," said Drummond. "The betting is a tenner to a dried banana that you expire within a week. Have some more cheese?"

"Don't be absurd, Drummond. If you think you are going to persuade me—you're wrong. I suppose that foolish boy Algy has been trying to enlist you on his side."

"Now look here, professor," said Hugh quietly. "Will you listen to me for a moment or two? It is perfectly true that Algy did suggest to me this morning that I should try to persuade you to accept the offer Sir Raymond made you. But I am not going to do anything of the sort. I may say that even this morning it struck me that far more serious things were at stake than your acceptance or refusal of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds. I am not at all certain in my own mind that if you accepted the money you would even then be safe. You are the owner of far too dangerous a piece of knowledge.

"However, as I say, it struck me this morning that things were serious. Now I'm sure of it, after what Toby said. He evidently knows nothing about it—so the big men are keeping it dark. Moreover, the biggest man of all, according to him, seems perfectly pleased with life at the present moment. Yet it's not due to anything that you have done; you haven't told them that you will accept their offer. Then why is he pleased? Most people wouldn't be full of happiness when they were facing immediate ruin. Professor, you may take it from me—and I am not an alarmist by any means—that the jolly old situation has just about as many unpleasant snags sticking out of it as any that I have ever



"Was it you, Lewisham?" asked Liebhaus. Mr. Lewisham swallowed once or twice, then he stood up, clutching the edge of the table. "Yes—it was," he said defiantly

he continued, holding out two or three sheets of note paper. "Whereas nobody worries over these notes on albuminized proteins."

Hugh stared at him in amazement.

"You don't mean to say that those are the notes of your diamond process!" he gasped. "Carried loose in your pocket in that fashion!"

"Yes—why not?" said the professor mildly. "I always carry things loose like that, otherwise I lose them. And I should be helpless without these."

contemplated. And I've contemplated quite a few in my life."

He sat back in his chair and drained his port, and the professor, impressed in spite of himself, looked at him in perplexity.

"Then what do you suggest that I should do, Drummond?" he asked. "This sort of thing is not at all in my line."

HUGH smiled. "No, I suppose it's not. Well, I'll tell you what I would suggest your doing. If you are determined to go through with this, I would first of all take that threatening letter to Scotland Yard. Ask for Sir Bryan Johnstone, tell him you're a pal of mine, call him Tum-tum, and he'll eat out of your hand. If you can't see him, round up Inspector McIver, and tell him—well, as much or as little as you like. Of course, it's a little difficult. You can hardly accuse Sir Raymond Blantyre of having sent the letter. Still, it seems the only thing to do.

"Then I propose that you and your wife and your daughter should come away—and Algy, too—and stop with my wife and me, for a little house-warming party at a new place I've just bought down in Sussex. I'll rope in a few of Algy's pals and mine to stop there at the same time, and we'll keep an eye on you until the meeting of the Royal Society."

"It's very good of you, Drummond," said the professor uncertainly. "I hardly know what to say. This letter, for instance."

He fumbled in his pocket and drew out a bunch of papers, which he turned over in his hands.

"To think that there's all this trouble over that,"

"Good heavens, man, you must be mad!" cried Hugh. "Do you mean to say that you couldn't carry on without those notes? And you carry them like that!"

"I should have to do it all over again, and it would take months to arrive at the right proportions once more." He was peering through the scattered sheets. "Even now I believe I've lost one—oh, no, here it is! You see, it doesn't make much odds, because no one could understand them except me."

Hugh looked at him speechlessly for a while; then he passed his hand dazedly across his forehead.

"My dear professor," he murmured, "you astound me. You positively stagger my brain. The only remaining thing which I feel certain you have not omitted to do is to let Sir Raymond and his friends know that you carry your notes about in your pocket like that. You haven't forgotten to tell them that, have you?"

"WELL, as a matter of fact, Drummond," said the professor apologetically, "I'm afraid they must guess that I do. You see, when I did my demonstration before them I pulled my notes out of my pocket just as I did a moment or two ago. I suppose it is foolish of me, but until now I haven't really thought any more about the matter. It's all come as such a complete shock, that I really don't know where I am. What do you think I'd better do with them?"

"Deposit them at your bank the very instant you leave here," said Hugh. "I will come around with you, and—well, what's the matter now, professor?"

The professor had risen to his feet, blinking rapidly in his agitation.

"Good heavens! Drummond, I had completely for-

gotten! All this bother put it quite out of my head. Professor Scheidstrun—a celebrated German geologist—made an appointment with me at my house for this afternoon. He has brought over several specimens of carboniferous quartz which he claims will completely refute a paper I have just written on the subject of crystalline deposits. I must get home at once, or I shall be late."

"Not quite so fast, professor," said Hugh, with a smile. "I don't know anything about carboniferous quartz, but there's one thing I do know. Not for one minute longer do you walk about the streets of London with those notes in your pocket. Come into the smoking room and we'll seal them up in an envelope. Then I'll take charge of them, at any rate until to-night, when I'm coming to dine at your house. And after dinner we can discuss matters further."

HE led the agitated savant into the smoking room, and stood over him while he placed various well-thumbed pieces of paper in an envelope. Then Hugh sealed the envelope and placed it in his pocket, and, with a sigh of relief, the professor rose. But Drummond had not finished yet.

"What about that letter and the police?" he said, holding out a detaining hand.

"My dear boy, I really haven't got the time now!" cried the old man. "You've no idea of the importance of this interview this afternoon. Why"—he laid his hand impressively on Drummond's arm—"if what Scheidstrun claims is correct, it may cause a complete revolution in our present ideas on the atomic theory! Think of that, my friend, think of that."

Drummond suppressed a strong desire to laugh.

"I'm thinking, professor," he murmured gravely. "And even if he does all that you say and more, I still think that you ought to go to the police with that letter."

"Tomorrow, Drummond—I will." Like a rabbit between a line of beaters the professor was dodging toward the door, with Drummond after him. "You shall come with me yourself tomorrow, I promise you. And we'll discuss matters again tonight. But the atomic theory—think of it!"

With a gasp of relief he dashed into a waiting taxi, leaving Hugh partially stupefied on the pavement.

"Tell the driver where to go, there's a good fellow!" cried the professor. "And if you could possibly lend me half a crown, I'd be very grateful. I've left all my money at home, as usual."

Drummond smiled and produced the necessary coin. Then a sudden thought struck him.

"I suppose you know this German bloke, don't you?"

"Yes, yes!" cried the professor testily. "Of course I know him. I met him ten years ago in Geneva. For goodness sake, my boy, tell the man to drive on!"

DRUMMOND watched the taxi swing around into King Street; then somewhat thoughtfully he went back into the club. Discussing the atomic theory with a German professor whom he knew seemed a comparatively safe form of amusement, calculated, in fact, to keep the professor out of mischief, but Hugh still felt vaguely uneasy. The man who had followed him seemed to have disappeared; St. James' Square was warm and peaceful.

From one point of view, it was hard to believe that any real danger could threaten the old man; Hugh felt he could understand the professor's surprised incredulity. As he had said, such things were out of his line. But as Drummond might have answered they were not out of *his*, and no man living knew better that strange things took place daily in London—things which would tax the credulity of the most hardened reader of sensational fiction. And the one great dominant point which stuck out, and refused to be argued away, was this: What was the life of one old man compared to the total loss of hundreds of millions of pounds, when viewed from the standpoint of the losers? He glanced at the envelope he still held in his hand, and slipped it into his pocket. Then he went into the telephone box and rang up his chauffeur to bring around his car.

He felt he wanted some fresh air to clear his brain, and all the way down to Ranelagh the same question kept clouding it. Why had that threatening letter been sent? If the intention was indeed to kill Professor Goodman, why, in the name of all that was marvelous, be so incredibly foolish as not only to warn him, but also to put that warning on paper? And if it was merely a bluff, again why put it on paper when the writer must have known that in all probability it would be taken straight to the police? Or was the whole thing just a silly jest, and was he, personally, making an appalling fool of himself by taking it seriously?

But the last alternative was untenable. The offer of a quarter of a million pounds was no jest; not even the most spritely humorist could possibly consider it one. And so he found himself back at the beginning again, and he was still there when he saw Algy and Brenda having tea.

He deposited himself in a vacant chair beside Brenda, and, having assured her of his continued devotion, he consumed the last sugar cake.

"THE male parent has just lunched with me," he remarked genially. "And as a result I am in the throes of brain fever. He borrowed half a crown, and went off in Admiral Ferguson's hat, as I subsequently discovered. I left the worthy seaman running around in small circles, snorting like a bull. You should discourage your father, Brenda, from keeping pieces of paper written on with copying ink in the lining. Old Ferguson, who put the hat on by mistake, has a chemistry lecture written all over his head."

"Did you persuade him not to be such an unmitigated idiot, Hugh?" asked the girl eagerly.

"I regret to state that I did not," answered Hugh. "In fact, honesty compels me to admit, Brenda, that I no longer wonder at his allowing you to marry Algy. He may be the outside size in chemistry, but beyond that he wants lessons. Will you believe it that at lunch today he suddenly removed from his pocket the notes of this bally discovery of his! He has been carrying them loose, along with some peppermint bull's-eyes and bits of string!"

"Oh! But he always carries everything like that," laughed the girl. "What is the old dear doing now?"

"He rushed away to commune with a German professor on carboniferous quartz and the atomic theory. Seemed immensely excited about it, so I suppose it means something. But to come to more important matters, I have invited him, and Mrs. Goodman and you, to come down and spend a few days with us in Sussex. We might even include Algy."

"What's the notion, old man?" murmured Algy. "Think he's more likely to see reason if we take him birds' nesting?"

"It's no good, Hugh," said Brenda decisively. "Besides, he wouldn't go."

She turned to speak to a passing acquaintance and Hugh bent over to Algy.

"He's jolly well got to go," he said in a low voice. "He was being followed this morning when I met him

outside the club, and he's had a letter threatening his life."

"The devil he has!" muttered Algy.

"If we can make him see reason and suppress his discovery, so much the better," went on Hugh. "Personally, I think he's a pig-headed old ass, and that it undoubtedly ought to be suppressed, but there's no good telling him that at present. But if he won't, it's up to me, anyway, to look after him, because he's utterly incapable of doing it himself. Not a word to Brenda, mind, about the letter or his being followed. He's all right for this afternoon, and we'll fix things up this evening definitely."

And, since the afternoon was all that an afternoon should be—and no one may ask for more than that and Ranelagh combined—it was just as well for the peace of mind of all concerned that no power of second-sight enabled them to see what was happening in Professor Goodman's laboratory, where he was discussing carboniferous quartz with a celebrated German geologist.

"Underneath that bench with him!" snapped Blackton

Chapter III

AT just about the same time that Algy Longworth was dancing on the pavement in Brook Street and demanding admission to Drummond's house, Sir Raymond Blantyre was holding a conference with the other members of the Metropolitan Diamond Syndicate. The proceedings were taking place behind locked doors and had an onlooker been present he would have noticed an air of tension in the room. For good or ill, the die was cast, and try as they would the seven eminently respectable city magnates assembled round the table could not rid themselves of the thought that they had deliberately hired a man to commit murder for them.

Not that they admitted it, even to themselves; at any rate, not as crudely as that. Mr. Blackton's services had been secured to arrange matters for them with Professor Goodman; to negotiate for the suppression of his discovery. How he did it, was, of course, his concern and had nothing whatever to do with them. Even Sir Raymond himself tried to lull his conscience by reflecting that perhaps the drastic measures alluded to in his interview at the Palace Hotel would not be necessary. And if they were—well, only a weak man wavered and hesitated, once he was definitely committed to a particular line of action.

After all, the responsibility was not his alone; he had merely been the spokesman for the combined opinions of the Syndicate, reached after mature reflection. And if Professor Goodman was so pig-headed and obstinate, he must take the consequences. There were others to be considered—all those who would be ruined.

Just at first, after his return from Switzerland, such specious arguments had served their purpose; but during the last two days they seemed to have lost some of their soothing power. He had found himself feverishly snatching at every fresh edition of the evening paper to see if anything had happened. He had even found himself wondering whether it was too late to stop things, even now; but he didn't know where the man who called himself Blackton could be found. From the moment when he had realized in the restaurant wagon that the old German professor and Mr. Edward Blackton were one and the same person, he had not set eyes on him again. There had been no trace of him in Paris, and no trace on the boat. He had no idea where he was; he did not even know if he was in London.

His check had been presented in Paris, so he had discovered from his bank only that morning. And that was the last trace of the man he had interviewed at Montreux.

"I suppose there's no chance of this man double-crossing us?" A dark sallow man was speaking, and Sir Raymond glanced up quickly. "When all is said and done, he has had a quarter of a million, and we're hardly in a position to claim it back, you know."

"That was one of the risks we discussed before we approached him," said Sir Raymond. "Of course there's a chance; that is obvious on the face of it. My impression is, however, that he will not—apart from the fact that another quarter of a million

is at stake. He struck me, in a very marked degree, as being a man of his word."

There was silence for a while, a silence which was broken suddenly by a mild-looking, middle-aged man.

"It's driving me mad, this—absolutely mad!" he cried, mopping the sweat from his forehead. "I fell asleep last night after dinner, and I tell you I woke up shouting. Dreams—the most awful dreams, with that poor old devil stabbed in the back and looking at me with great staring eyes. He was calling me a murderer, and I couldn't stand it any more. I know I agreed to it originally, but I can't go on with it—I can't!"

There was a moment's tense silence, and then Sir Raymond spoke.

"I don't understand you, Mr. Lewisham," he said coldly. "It is quite impossible for you to back out of it now, without betraying us all. And, anyway, I should be greatly obliged if you would lower your voice."

WITH a great effort, Mr. Lewisham controlled himself.

"Can't we think of some other method, gentlemen?" he said. "This seems so horribly cold-blooded."

"What other possible method is there?" snarled Leibhaus. "We've tried everything."

The telephone in front of Sir Raymond rang suddenly, and every one started. It showed the condition of their nerves, and for an appreciable time the president tried to steady his hand before he picked up the receiver. And when after a few seconds he laid it down again, he moistened his lips with his tongue before he trusted himself to speak.

"Mr. Blackton will be with us in quarter of an hour, gentlemen," he remarked, and his voice was shaking a little. "I have no idea what he wants, and I am somewhat surprised at his coming here, since I laid especial stress on the fact that we were not to be implicated in any way with his—er—visit to England."

He gave a brief order through a speaking tube; then he rose and walked wearily up and down the room. The prospect of meeting Blackton again was not at all to his taste, though his dislike was not in any way due to a belated access of better feeling and remorse. It was due to the fact that Blackton as a man thoroughly frightened him, and as he paced up and down, glancing at his watch every half minute or so, he felt exactly as he had felt in years long gone by when he had been told that the headmaster was awaiting him in his study.

It was useless to try to bolster up his courage by reflecting that Blackton was, after all, merely the paid servant of his Syndicate. He knew perfectly well that Blackton was nothing of the sort, any more than a doctor can be regarded as the paid servant of his patient. The situation, in brief, was that Mr. Blackton for a suitable fee had agreed to assist them professionally, and any other interpretation of the position would be exceedingly unwise.

HE started nervously as he heard the sound of voices on the stairs, but it was with a very creditable imitation of being at ease that he went forward as the door opened and Mr. Blackton was shown in. He had discarded the disguise he had worn in the train, and appeared as he had been at their first meeting in Switzerland. He nodded briefly to Sir Raymond; then, coming a few steps into the room, he favored each man present with a penetrating stare. Then he laid his gloves on the table and sat down.

"On receiving your message I was not quite sure in which guise we were to expect you," said Sir Raymond, breaking the silence.

"The absurd passport regulations," said Mr. Blackton suavely, "necessitate one's altering one's appearance at times. However, to get to business. You are doubtless wondering at my action in coming around to see you. I may say that I had no intention of so doing until this morning. I have been in London for two days, and my plans were complete—when a sudden and most unexpected hitch occurred." He paused and fixed his eyes on Sir Raymond. "How many people are there who know of Professor Goodman's discovery?"

"His family and our Syndicate," answered the president.

"No one else in the diamond world except the gentlemen in this room know anything about it?"

"No one!" cried Sir Raymond. "We have most sedulously kept it dark. I feel sure I may speak for my friends."

He glanced around the room and there was a murmur of assent.

"Then I am forced to the conclusion," continued Mr. Blackton, "that the writer of an anonymous letter received by the professor this morning is among us at the moment."

His eyes traveled slowly around the faces of his audience to fasten on Mr. Lewisham, whose telltale start had given him away.

"I am informed," went on Mr. Blackton, "and my informant, who was cleaning the windows among other things at the professor's house, is a very reliable man—I am informed, I say, that this morning the professor received a letter stating that unless he accepted the money you had offered him, he would be killed. Now, who can have been so incredibly foolish as to have sent that letter?"

MR. LEWISHAM fidgeted in his chair, until at length every one in the room noting the direction of Blackton's glance was staring at him.

"Was it you, Lewisham?" snapped Leibhaus.

Mr. Lewisham swallowed once or twice; then he stood up, clutching the edge of the table.

"Yes—it was," he said defiantly. "It seemed to me that we ought to neglect no possible chance of getting him to agree to our terms. I typed it, and posted it myself last night."

Smothered curses came from all sides; only Mr. Blackton seemed unmoved.

"You have realized, of course, what will happen should Professor Goodman take that letter to the police," he remarked quietly. "The fact that it was your Syndicate that offered him the money will make it a little unpleasant for you all."

But behind the impassive mask of his face, Mr. Blackton's brain was busy. The thing—the only thing with which even the most perfectly laid schemes were unable to cope had happened here. And that thing was having a chicken-hearted confederate or, worse still, one who was suddenly smitten with conscience. Against such a person nothing could be done. He introduced into any situation an incalculable factor with which even a master craftsman was unable to deal.

Not that he had the remotest intention of giving up the scheme—that was not Mr. Blackton's way at all. Since the interview at Montreux a further priceless idea had come to him, which would render this coup even more wonderful than he had at first thought. Not only would he amass a large store of diamonds himself, but, after that had been done, and any further necessity for the continued existence of Professor Goodman had ceased, he would still have the secret of the process in his possession. And this secret he proposed to sell for a

He advanced toward the parlor maid, gesticulating wildly. "Where is your master?" he cried. "I cannot here the whole day wait!"

price considerably in excess of the two hundred and fifty thousand pounds offered to its original discoverer. After which he would decide what to do with the copy he had kept.

In fact, Mr. Blackton fully realized that, in the hands of a master expert like himself, the affair presented promises of such boundless wealth that at times it almost staggered even him. And now, at the last moment, this new factor—which might possibly jeopardize his whole carefully thought out scheme—had been introduced into the situation, and the problem was to turn it to the best advantage.

"I don't care," Mr. Lewisham was saying obstinately to the little group of men who were standing around him. "I don't care if that letter of mine does stop it all. I'd sooner be ruined than go through the rest of my life feeling that I was a murderer."

"MR. LEWISHAM seems a little excited," said Blackton suavely. "Who, may I ask, has said anything about murder?"

They fell silent, and stared at him.

"When Sir Raymond Blantyre came to me in Montreux his request to me was to prevent the publication of this secret process of Professor Goodman's. I stated that I would. I stated that the professor would not give his lecture before the Royal Society. I believe that the word murder occurred in the conversation"—he gave a somewhat pained smile—"but, do you really imagine, gentlemen, that my methods are as crude as that?"

He carefully lit a cigar, while his audience waited breathlessly for him to continue.

"Since I find, however, that this gentleman has been so incredibly foolish and has lost his head so pitiably, I regret to state that in all probability I shall have to wash my hands of the entire business."

Cries of anger and dismay greeted this announcement, though the anger was entirely directed against the author of the ill-advised letter.

"But, really——" stammered Mr. Lewisham, plucking nervously at his collar.

"You have behaved like a foolish, hysterical schoolgirl, sir!" snapped Blackton. "You have jeopardized the success of my entire plan, and apart altogether from the sending of this letter you have shown yourself to be totally unfitted to be mixed up in an affair of this description. Even if the police did treat it as a stupid hoax: even, in fact, if we were able to prevent the letter being shown to the police at all, you are still totally unfit to be trusted. You would probably proclaim your sins through a megaphone in Trafalgar Square, taking special care to incriminate all these other gentlemen. And so I

think, since you have decided to act on your own initiative in this way, you had better undertake the affair yourself."

He rose as if to leave, only to be surrounded at once by the other members of the Syndicate who implored him to reconsider his decision. And at length Mr. Blackton allowed himself to be persuaded to resume his chair. His indifference was sublime: to all outward intents and purposes, he was utterly bored with the whole proceedings.

"Really, Mr. Blackton—I implore of you, we all implore of you not to desert us like this!" Sir Raymond's eyeglass was dreadfully agitated. "Can nothing be done to counteract Mr. Lewisham's inconceivable stupidity?"

MR. BLACKTON affected to consider the point. Not for him to say that he had already decided exactly what was going to be done; not for him to say that the sole object of his recent remarks had been to produce the exact atmosphere that now existed—an atmosphere of combined antagonism to Lewisham, and an uncomfortable feeling on the part of that unfortunate man that he really had made a fool of himself. And certainly not for him to say what he had decided was a meet and fit punishment for Mr. Lewisham.

He shrugged his shoulders indifferently.

"Since Mr. Lewisham has caused all this trouble," he said carelessly, "it is up to Mr. Lewisham to endeavor to rectify it."

A chorus of approval greeted the remark, and Lewisham leaned forward a little in his chair.

"I suggest, therefore, that this afternoon he should pay a visit to Professor Goodman, and find out what has happened to his letter. Should it have been handed over to the police he must endeavor to convince the professor that it was a stupid practical joke on his part, and persuade him to ring up Scotland Yard and explain things. There will be no need for Mr. Lewisham's name to be mentioned, if he handles the professor tactfully. On the other hand, if the note has not been handed over to the police, Mr. Lewisham must endeavor to regain possession of it. And, according to Mr. Lewisham's report, I will decide whether I can continue in this matter or not."

"That is tantamount to an avowal that the letter was sent by a member of our Syndicate," said Sir Raymond doubtfully. "You don't think that perhaps it might be advisable to say that he had just discovered that some clerk had played a foolish practical joke."

"The point seems really immaterial," returned Mr. Blackton indifferently. "But if Mr. Lewisham prefers to say that, by all means let him do so."

"You will go, of course, Lewisham," said Sir Raymond, and the other man nodded.

"I will go and see what I can do," he answered. "And I can take it from you, Mr. Blackton, that there will be no question of—of—killing Professor Goodman?"

FOR a brief moment there came into Mr. Blackton's gray-blue eyes a faint gleam, as if some delicate inward jest was tickling his sense of humor.

"You may take it from me," he answered gravely, "that nothing so unpleasant is likely to happen to Professor Goodman."

Mr. Lewisham gave a sigh of relief.

"What time shall I go?" he asked.

Mr. Blackton paused in the act of drawing on his gloves.

"The professor, I am told," he remarked, "has an appointment at three o'clock this afternoon. I would suggest, therefore, that you should call about two-thirty."

"And where shall I communicate with you?"

"You can leave that entirely to me, Mr. Lewisham," murmured the other, with an almost benevolent smile. "I will take all the necessary steps to get in touch with you. Well, gentlemen"—he turned to the others—"that is all, I think, for the present. I will report further in due course. By the way, Mr. Lewisham, I wouldn't give your name to the servant, if I were you."

With a slight bow he opened the door and passed down the stairs. He paused as he reached the crowded pavement and spoke two words to a man who was staring into a shop window; then he deliberated whether he should call a taxi, and finally decided to walk. And as he strolled along—slowly, so as not to destroy the aroma of his cigar, his reflections were eminently satisfactory. If the police had not received the note, he was in clover: if they had, a little care would be necessary. But in either case the one detail which had previously been, if not lacking, at any rate not entirely satisfactory, was now supplied.

It gratified his intellect: it pleased his artistic sense. Just as the sudden and unexpected acquisition of a tube of some rare pigment completes a painter's joy, so this one detail completed Mr. Blackton's. That it consisted of a singularly cold-blooded murder is beside the point: all artists are a little peculiar. And if fool men write fool letters they must expect to suffer small annoyances of that sort. After all, reflected Mr. Blackton with commendable thoughtfulness, the world would endure Mr. Lewisham's departure with almost callous fortitude.

HE realized suddenly that he had reached his destination and, throwing away his cigar, he produced his latchkey and entered the house. It was situated in one of those quiet squares which lie, like placid backwaters, off the seething rivers of London. And its chief point of interest lay in the fact that it formed the invariable pied-à-terre of Mr. Blackton when he was visiting England in whatever character he might at the moment be assuming. It appeared in the telephone book as belonging to William Anderson, a gentleman who spent much of his time abroad. And it was to William Anderson that the Inland Revenue were wont yearly to address their friendly reminders as to the duties of British citizens.

Ever mindful of those duties, Mr. Anderson had declared his income at nineteen hundred and fifty pounds per annum, and had opened a special account at a branch bank to cope with the situation. He drew the line at admitting his liability to super-tax: but after mature reflection he decided that his method of life rendered it advisable to state that his income was unearned.

He placed his gloves and stick on the table in the hall, and slowly ascended the stairs. A few little details still required polishing up in connection with his afternoon's work, and he was deep in thought as he entered a room on the first landing.

Seated at a desk was a man who rose as he entered—a man whose face was well-nigh as inscrutable as his chief's. He was Mr. Blackton's confidential secretary, Freyder—a man with a salary of ten thousand a year plus commission. He was as completely unscrupulous as his employer, but he lacked the wonderful organizing brain of the other. Given a certain specific job to do, he could carry it out to perfection; and for making arrangements in detail he was unrivaled. Which made him an ideal staff officer—a fact that the other had very soon recognized. And because Edward Blackton, like all big men, was not such a fool as to underpay an almost invaluable subordinate, he took care that Freyder's salary should be such that he would have no temptation to go. For it he demanded implicit obedience, no mis-

Professor Scheidstrun was ready to discuss the atomic theory, with special reference to carboniferous quartz

takes, and at times twenty-four hours' work out of twenty-four.

"What did you find out, Chief?" Freyder asked curiously.

"It was sent by one of them, as I suspected," answered Blackton, seating himself at his desk. "A stupid little man called Lewisham, who appears to have lost his head completely. However, on my assuring him that I had no intention of killing the excellent Goodman, he agreed to go around this afternoon to talk to the professor about the matter."

"Go around this afternoon!" echoed Freyder, surprised. "What do you want him there for, this afternoon?"

Blackton smiled gently.

"He happens to be about the same size as our worthy professor," he murmured, "so it struck me he would come in very handy. By the way, make a note, will you, to obtain a specimen of his writing and signature. Find out if he's married, and, if so, draft a letter to his wife from him saying that he's gone to Valparaiso for the good of his health. Have it sent out to Number 13, and posted there."

He stared thoughtfully out of the window, and Freyder waited for any further instructions.

"Anything more to be settled about the house?"

"Everything fixed, Chief. It's ready to move straight into this afternoon."

The telephone bell rang on Freyder's table.

"Good," he remarked a few moments later, replacing the receiver. "Number 10 reports that he followed Goodman to St. James' Square, that he is now having lunch at the Junior Sports Club, and that he has not communicated verbally with the police."

"And since the letter was in his pocket when he left his house, presumably he has not communicated in writing. He must be a frivolous old man, Freyder, to lunch at such a club. Anyway, I trust he will have a

substantial meal, as I'm afraid his constitution may be tried a little during the next few hours." He glanced at his watch. "The box and the men are ready?"

"Loaded up on the car at the garage."

"Excellent. Then I think a pint of champagne, and a little caviare—and after that I must get to work. And we will drink a silent toast to the worthy Mr. Lewisham for his kindly forethought in being much the same size as the professor, and wish him *bon voyage* to—what did I say?—oh yes, Valparaiso!"

"I don't quite get Mr. Lewisham's part in this show, Chief," remarked Freyder.

Blackton positively chuckled.

"No more does he, my good Freyder—no more does he. But I can positively assure you of one thing: he is not going to Valparaiso."

AND he was still chuckling ten minutes later when he rose and passed into an inner room at the back. It was a strange place—this inner sanctum of Mr. Edward Blackton. The window was extra large, and was made of frosted glass which effectually prevented any inquisitive neighbor from seeing in. Around the walls full-length mirrors set at different angles enabled him to see himself from every position—an indispensable adjunct to making-up on the scale he found necessary. A huge cupboard filled one wall of the room, a cupboard crammed with clothes and boots of all sorts and descriptions—while on a shelf at the top, each in its separate pigeonhole, were half a dozen wigs.

But the real interest of the room lay in the small dressing table which he proceeded to unlock. A score of little bottles containing strange liquids: brushes: instruments: lumps of a peculiar putty-like substance were all most carefully arranged on shelves. And it was the contents of this table far more than any change of clothes that enabled him to make such extraordinary alterations in his personal appearance. Literally, when seated at that table, he could build himself a new face. He could change the color of his eyes, he could alter the shape of his nose. A judicious stain could turn his normally perfect teeth into unpleasant, badly kept ones: while on the subject of dyes for hair and eyebrows he could have written a textbook.

It was three quarters of an hour before the door opened again and the snuffling, querulous old German of the restaurant wagon emerged. Professor Scheidstrun was ready to discuss the atomic theory with Professor Goodman, with special reference to carboniferous quartz. Outside the door a motor car was standing with a large box on board containing his specimens: while by its side were two men who were to lift the box off the car, and in due course lift it on again. And the only other thing of interest which might be mentioned in passing is that if Frau Scheidstrun had happened to see him getting into the car, wheezing peevishly in German, she would undoubtedly have wondered what on earth her husband was doing in London—so perfect was the make-up. But since that excellent woman was chasing the elusive mark in Dresden at the moment, there was but little fear of such an unfortunate contretemps.

IT was at twenty minutes past two that he arrived at Professor Goodman's house. As he stepped out of the car a man walked quietly toward him, a man who stopped to watch the big box being carefully lowered to the ground. He stopped just long enough to say, "No one in the house except the servants," and then he strolled on.

With great care the two men carried the box up the steps, and, considering that the contents were lumps of carboniferous quartz, the intense respect with which they handled it might have struck an onlooker as strange. But the parlor maid, grown used through long experience to the sudden appearance of strange individuals at odd hours, merely led the way to the laboratory, and, having remarked that the professor might be back at three, or possibly not till six, according to whether he had remembered the appointment or not, she returned to her interrupted dinner.

"Get the box undone," said Blackton curtly. "But don't take anything out."

The two men set to work, while he walked quickly around every corner of the room. Of necessity, something had had to be left to chance and though he was perfectly capable of dealing with the unexpected when it arrived he preferred to have things as far as possible cut and dried beforehand. And at the moment what he wanted to find was a cupboard large enough to accommodate a man. Not that it was absolutely necessary, but it would assist matters, especially in the event of the professor bringing a friend with him. That was a possibility always present in his mind, and one which he had been unable to guard against without running the risk of rousing the professor's suspicions.

He found what he wanted in a corner—a big recess under the working bench, screened by a curtain and used for old retorts and test tubes. It was ideal for his purpose, and with a nod of satisfaction he went over to the door. All was well—the key was on the inside, and with one final glance around the room the exponent of the new atomic theory sat down to wait.

BEFORE him lay the riskiest thing he had ever done in all his risky career, but had any one felt his pulse he would have found it normal. And it wasn't of the next hour that Mr. Blackton was thinking so much, but of the future when his coup had succeeded. That it would succeed was certain: no thought of failure was ever allowed to enter his mind.

Five minutes passed: ten—when the ringing of the front door bell brought him back from dreams of the future. This must be Mr. Lewisham and with his arrival came the time for action. Blackton listened intently, wondering whether he would be shown into the laboratory or into some other room. If the latter, it would necessitate getting him in there on some pretext, but steps coming along the passage settled that point. Once more the door was flung open by the parlor maid: once more she returned to better things in the servants' hall.

Lewisham paused, and glanced a little doubtfully at the old German in his dirty black clothes. One of the professor's chemical friends, evidently: possibly it would be better to wait somewhere else. He half turned to the door as if to go out again, when suddenly he felt two hands like bars of steel around his throat. For a moment or two he struggled impotently: then he grew quiet. And after a while the limp body slipped to the floor and lay still.

"Underneath that bench with him!" snapped Blackton. "Quick."

He had opened the door an inch or two and was peering out. The passage was empty, and faint sounds were coming up the stairs from the servants' quarters.

"Stay where you are," he said to the two men. "I shall be back in a minute."

He walked along the passage toward the front door, which he opened. Then he deliberately rang the bell, and stood for a few seconds, peering out. And it was not until he heard the footsteps of the parlor maid that

he shut the door again with a bang, and advanced toward her gesticulating wildly.

"Where is your master?" he cried. "I must to my business get: I cannot here the whole day wait. That other gentleman—he does not wait. He go. I, too—I follow him." He glanced at the girl. "Speak, woman." He waved his arms at her, and she retreated in alarm. "I will take my specimens, and I will go—like him."

STILL muttering horribly under his breath, he walked up and down the hall, while the parlor maid endeavored to soothe him.

"I expect the professor will be back soon, sir," she murmured.

"Soon!" he raved. "I who have come from Germany him to see, and then I wait. He write to me: I write to him—and then I come with my specimens. And you say soon. *Nein*—I go. I go like that other."

It was at that moment that the front door opened and Professor Goodman entered.

"A thousand apologies, my dear professor!" he cried, hurrying forward. "I fear I am late—very late. I hope. I have not kept you waiting."

He led the other toward the laboratory, and the parlor maid made hurried tracks for safety.

"No wonder that there other one wouldn't wait," she remarked to the cook. "He's a holy terror—that German. Dirty old beast, with egg all over his coat, waving his arms at me. Old Goodman is a pretty fair freak, but he does wash. I 'opes he enjoys himself," she added.

Which was a kindly thought on the part of the parlor maid. And the fact that it was expressed at the exact moment that Professor Goodman went fully under the influence of an anæsthetic may be regarded as a strange coincidence. For there was no time wasted in the laboratory that afternoon. Much had to be done and hardly had the door closed behind the master of the house when he found himself seized and pinioned. One feeble cry was all he gave: then a pad soaked in ether was pressed over his nose and mouth, and the subsequent proceedings ceased to interest him.

Very interesting proceedings they were, too—that went on behind the locked door. Bursts of German loquacity, with intervals of a voice astonishingly like Professor Goodman's, would have convinced any inquisitive person listening outside the door that the two savants were in full blast. Not that any one was likely to listen, but Blackton was not a man who took chances. And it takes time to change completely two men's clothes, when one is dead and the other is unconscious.

ONE hour it was, to be exact, before the body of Mr. Lewisham, dressed in Professor Goodman's clothes, even down to his boots, was propped up in a chair against the bench, with various bottles and retorts in front of him. One hour and a quarter it was before a number of small packets had been taken from the big wooden case and stacked carefully on the bench so that they touched the dead man's chest.

One hour and a half it was to the minute before the still unconscious Professor Goodman was placed as comfortably as possible—Mr. Blackton had no wish to run any chances with *his* health—in the big wooden case, and nailed up. And during the whole of that hour and a half the discussion on carboniferous quartz had continued with unabated zest.

At last, however, everything was finished, and Blackton took from his pocket a little instrument which he handled very gingerly. First of all he wound it up rather as a Bee clock is wound, and when it was ticking gently he placed it in the centre of the heap of small packets. Then he unlocked the door.

"Put the box on the car," he ordered. "Then pick up Freyder, and go straight to the house."

Once again the two men staggered down the passage with their load while Blackton glanced at his watch. Just a quarter of an hour to put through—before things happened. He closed the door again, and once more his guttural voice was raised in wordy argument for the benefit of any possible audience. And in the intervals when he ceased only the faint ticking broke the silence. Everything had gone without a hitch, but there were still one or two small things to be done. And the first of these showed the amazing attention to detail which characterized all his actions. He took the key from the door and put it on the desk: a master key of his own would enable him to lock the door from outside, whereas the presence of the key in the room would make it appear that it had been kept locked from within. And it was precisely that appearance which he wished given.

Once more he looked at his watch: ten minutes to go. Nervous work, that waiting: even he began to feel the strain. But he daren't go too soon: he daren't leave too long a space of time between the moment he left the house and the moment when the ticking would cease. And he didn't want to go too late, because the last thing he desired was to be on, or even too near, the premises when the ticking ceased. Moreover, there was always the possibility of a flaw in the mechanism. Morelli was a wonderful craftsman, and he had staked his reputation on it taking exactly a quarter of an hour. But, even so, it was nervous work—waiting.

PRECISELY five minutes later—and they were the longest five minutes Mr. Blackton had ever spent in his life—he pressed the bell. His guttural voice was raised in expostulation and argument as the parlor maid knocked at the door. Still talking, he opened it himself, and over his shoulder the girl got a fleeting glimpse of Professor Goodman absorbed in one of his experiments to the exclusion of all else.

"My hat, girl!" cried the German, waving his arms at her. She went to get it, and from behind her back came the noise of a key turning. "*Ach*, my friend—no one will disturb you," rumbled the German. "No need to your door lock." Mechanically he took the hat the parlor maid was holding out, while he still continued muttering to himself. "What is the good? One mistake and you will experiment no more. You and your house will go sky-high."

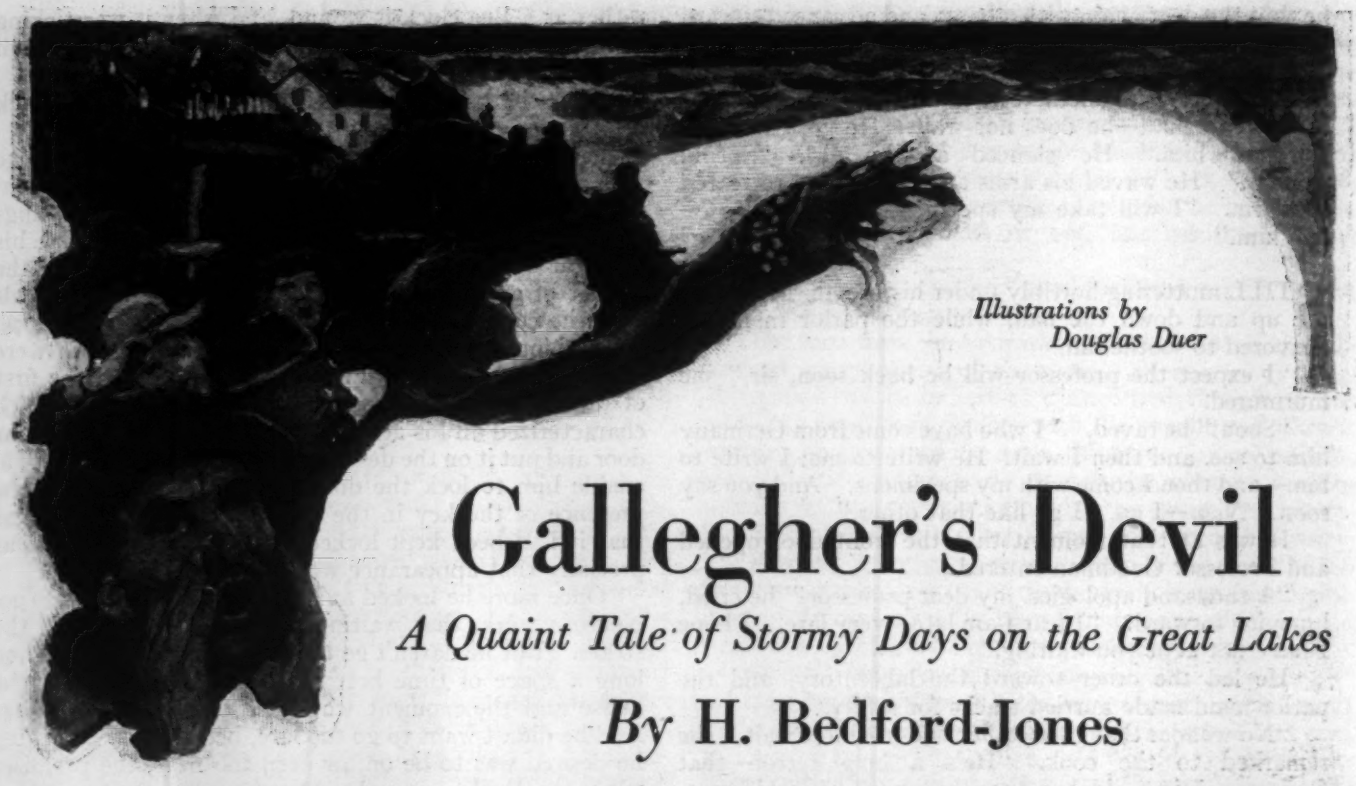
Still waving his arms, he shambled off down the street, and the girl stood watching him. And it was just after he had turned the corner and she was expressing her opinion of his appearance to the cook who was taking a breather in the area below, that she was hurled forward flat on her face. A terrific explosion shook the house; windows broke; plaster and pictures came crashing down.

And if it was bad in the front, it was immeasurably worse at the back. A huge hole had been blown in the outside wall of what had once been the professor's laboratory: the three inside walls had collapsed, and the ceiling had descended, bringing with it a bed, two wardrobes, and a washing stand complete.

In fact, there was every justification for the remark of the parlor maid as she picked herself up.

"Lumme! What's the old fool done now? I suppose he'll ring the bell in a minute and ask me to sweep up the mess."

[*To be continued in the November* McClure's]



Illustrations by Douglas Duer

Gallegher's Devil

A Quaint Tale of Stormy Days on the Great Lakes

By H. Bedford-Jones

THE summer Cap'n Vesty Gallegher came home to Beaver Island, after forty years on the big ocean—though he'd been back now and again—there was hard times up and down the islands. Even the Israelites on High Island looked peaked behind their beards. The fishing was poor, crops were worse, prices were high, and even the huckleberry swamps on the mainland promised no yield, so that the Indians were like to starve next winter. Tourists were few, and every one knew that Kitty Dunlevy would lose the hotel come autumn, on the mortgage to the Charlevoix bank, and she going on fifty. A pity was this, since Kitty had a smile for all and a bit of roguery in her eye that would charm a saint, and she alone in the world with sorrows behind her.

Cap'n Vesty Gallegher got off the mail boat, and another man with him, and in no time at all the word was spreading that Cap'n Vesty was home for good. It was ten years since the island had seen him, and there was great hand-shaking and greeting on the dock. The other man was Cap'n Connie O'Brien, whom nobody knew at all, and he a little old man with a limp, one eyebrow lifting up toward his white hair, a thin, hooked nose and a quick and piercing eye that missed nothing. When the people came up from the dock, Father John and Salty Gallegher were standing by McCann's store, and the good Father shook his head.

"That big man's Cap'n Vesty," said he to Salty. "The big heart of him in his eye, and his red face the same as ever, though his hair's white."

"Firm step," said Salty, who wasted no words.

"Aye, and a boy's heart in him, and no decenter man ever lived! But by this and by that, would ye take two looks at the old divil walking beside him!"

"One's enough," said Salty.

Finishing the pull up the loose sand, the two came to the sidewalk with the crowd trailing them; Cap'n Vesty Gallegher gripped the hand of the priest, and clapped him hard on the back, and his red, salt-bitten face was beaming.

"Father, it's an old man ye are," said he, "but you'll live to bury me yet, praise be! Don't nobody ever die on the island, then?" he asked, with a wink at his companion.

"None but Galleghers," said the priest, with a chuckle, and there was some truth to it. "Ye old rascal, I hear ye've done with wanderin' up and down the earth!"

"Glory be, I have that," said Cap'n Vesty, and pulled forward his friend. "Here, Father, meet me old friend and brother skipper, Cap'n Connie O'Brien, who's come to visit me and maybe end his days in peace! We're the same age to a day, and that's just sixty-two come Michaelmas."

From the way of him, one gathered that he had known Cap'n Connie these many years.

"I'm glad to meet ye," said Father John. He gripped the hand of Cap'n Connie, who gave him a keen look and the half a smile on his leathery old face. "From the north of Ireland?"

"From County Cork," said Cap'n Connie.

"Oh! Then it's a southern O'Brien ye are!" exclaimed the Father.

"YES, it is," put in Cap'n Vesty hurriedly, knowing that there was feeling against them of the south. "Cap'n Connie has a gold watch for saving his ship and passengers, Father, and a medal besides, and when the Germans blowed up his ship in the war, his leg was hurt and he got another medal for that, praise be! And now we'll be goin' up to the hotel, and if you'll drop in on us tonight we'll be more than glad of the honor."

"I'll do that, Vesty," said the Father, and watched the two of them go on up the sidewalk, but there was a queer look in his eye.

The welcome that Cap'n Vesty got was that of a great man, for he had made money on the sea and had property waiting for him at home. Cap'n Vesty was the last of the older line of Galleghers, having ties of blood with most of the island families, and one reason he had come home was that a farm was waiting for him by Mount Pisgah, and another down toward the head, both good ones and he heir to them both. Those who saw him greet Kitty Dunlevy at the hotel gate said there was maybe another and better reason, for he took her two

Darkness was gathering when they came staggering toward the breakwater, where the currents were treacherous and the seas thundering in. Crowds of people were watching to see the shipwreck

hands and kissed her cheek, and swung her up in the air with a great laugh. Mother McCann was standing by, and told him to take shame for such actions, at which he turned and gave her the same, and she cursing him, but with a laugh in her eye until he set her down. Cap'n Connie shook hands pleasantly enough, and by all accounts was a civil-spoken man.

QUITE a few dropped in at the hotel that evening, for Sevinsky, the hardwood cruiser, had brought a drop of brandy from the Canadian Sault, so what with one thing and another nobody minded a chat around the fire. Willy John was there, and Big Owen, and Salty, and Tight Gallegher with his crutch was in from the farm, and a cattle buyer from Charlevoix, and Willy Boyle and a few besides, with Kitty Dunlevy and the two McCann girls who helped her with the running of the hotel. There was talk of old times and them that were buried long since, and visiting into Sevinsky's room and out again, and the fire crackled on the hearth with a bit of oak from the old Mormon schooner in Cap'n Allers' back yard. In the easy-chair sat Cap'n Vesty, smoking big cigars and looking like a boy for all the years on him, which was a way the Galleghers had. Cap'n Connie sat in the corner and said never a word, but missed nothing.

After a bit old Neil McCann came in and spread himself before the blaze. Old he was, past ninety, white-bearded and a trifle deaf for his age, with a mortal sharp tongue to him. He clawed his beard, looked Cap'n Vesty up and down, and spoke out.

"It's a spry lad ye are, Vesty," said he, "and a rich man, wid money in your fist and cattle runnin' by the head of the island, and two farms and piannys in 'em both. Is it a good son of the church ye are this day, and come by your money honest?"

Cap'n Vesty tipped Father John a wink, and took the cigar from his mouth.

"I hope so, Neil," he shouted.

Old Neil clawed his beard and spat in the fire.

"Then," said he, "the day we left Ireland together I made your poor father—rest his sowl!—the loan o' twenty pound, and it's never been repaid. And what's more, me lad, yonder's Tom O'Donnell and him in a bad way, owin' money for his nets and the fish runnin' poor; and yonder's Kitty Dunlevy, who'll lose the hotel to the bank this year on the mortgage, whilst you sit here wid a cigar in the teeth of ye and a grin on your red face!"

Cap'n Vesty stared at him a minute, then swung to his feet and turned.

"Is that so!" said he. "Tom, how much do ye owe on them nets?"

"Eight hundred for the twine and the makin', Vesty," said Tom O'Donnell.

Cap'n Vesty reached in his hip pocket and hauled out a mortal big pocketbook and unhitched the clasp of it.

"Here's your eight hundred," said he, with a flutter of yellowbacks as he counted them out. He turned again to old Neil. "And here's your twenty pound, with a trifle of interest. Kitty, me lass! We'll lift the mortgage tomorry, and ye'll make me out a fresh one for the matter o' three months, and damn the interest!"

There was a minute of silence, while Cap'n Connie leaned forward, his glittering eyes shining like jet. Then everybody began to talk at once.

ON the Thursday night after this, there was a dance in the schoolhouse for the benefit of the new roof on the church, and things happened.

While the Pisgah farm, close by town, was being fixed up for them to live in, Cap'n Vesty and Cap'n Connie were staying at the hotel. By this time Cap'n Connie was not badly liked. Though he had no religion and was a small man with a limp to him, there was a fund of things beneath the surface, and amazing knowledge. He had a masterful way with him; and with maybe a drink or two under his skin he could tell tales of the sea and ships and men, and had some most surprising oaths that even Willy Boyle had never heard, and he for forty years a bartender.

In the meanwhile, Cap'n Vesty had bought a Ford car to be fetched over from the mainland, and lent out amounts of money to any who needed it, with the smile ever on his red face and the twinkle in his blue eye, and the open heart to all. Cap'n Connie made him take paper for the loans, and security, and though Cap'n Vesty laughed at all that, men said it was only fair.

On the night of the dance, the two old skippers came bringing Kitty Dunlevy between them, though it was Cap'n Vesty who had the first dance with her. About the door there were Joe Bowery and Conn Gatcliff and a few more lads, and many a one of them with a bottle under his coat, while Sevinsky had brought a spoonful of brandy along. Cap'n Connie fell into talk with them, and none had to ask him twice for his opinion of their liquor, since he was a grand judge and willing to oblige. Now when the lads saw that it began to get the edge of him, they sent word in to Cap'n Vesty, and out he came; and pretty soon there was more talk and laughter outside the door than there was dancing on the floor, with Cap'n Vesty showing how a sea shanty was sung, and Cap'n Connie to back him. Then somebody let slip the wrong word, and Cap'n Connie took it up in a flash.

"Old, is it?" said he. "Old as I am and lame as I am, by the poker I can step down any lad of ye! What are ye but a lot o' fresh-water farmers?"

"Gallegher's Divil!" said Kitty. "Get out o' here, for I'd not marry the likes of you if ye was the last man on the Beavers—ye ould thievin' divil, ye!"

"Stow your jaw!" said Cap'n Vesty, laughing and all in good humor. "These lads ha' been sailing real craft, skipper, whilst ye been mastering iron boats under steam. Aye, and——"

"Iron boats, is it?"

Cap'n Connie whirled, with a glare in his eye that made the lads fall quiet. An evil glare it was, and the lip drew back from his yellow teeth, and the uptwisted eyebrow made him look like the foul fiend in the picture of hell that hangs in Willy John's house.

"Iron boats!" said he. "Ye old wreck of a bilged barnacle, ye crazy old dodderin' hulk of misspent humanity, who are ye to tell me of iron boats, and you with one foot in the grave? Did ye ever hear o' the Blackball days, ye old ruin? Whist!" he cried contemptuously.

Cap'n Vesty laughed at him, and took another pull at Sevinsky's bottle.

"The Blackball packets were off the seas afore your time, me lad," said he.

"Is that so!" screamed Cap'n Connie, who was now in a fury and no mistake. "Didn't I sail wid ol' Marshall, the son of Alexander—him wid the steel hand—and Bully Forrester, and ol' Peabody of the *Neptune?* A packet rat, that's what I was, same as Harry Lovell and Cutface Sullivan! A lot ye know, ye poor old whisperin' hulk, that never heard a shanty sung right in your life, to talk to the likes o' me!"

"G'wan wid ye," laughed Cap'n Vesty, though beginning to feel a bit spry his own self. "Who's sayin' I'm old, eh?"

"I am!" yelled Cap'n Connie, his gnarled fingers opening and closing before him as he glared. "If I had ye on a quarterdeck, ye old fossil, I'd show ye who was best man!"

"Step him down, Vesty!" sung out somebody. From the look on Cap'n Connie's face, more than one was afraid of murder being done. "On the flure wid 'em! Hey, Micky Briggs!"

There was shoving and pushing, while Micky Briggs got to the piano with his fiddle, and struck into the jig, and another minute saw everybody off the floor and the two old sea captains stepping each other down like any young lads. There was a large difference in the way they did it, however—Cap'n Vesty laughing and winking at the girls along the wall, his white hair flying like a mop and his fingers snapping on the high steps, and every one on the broad grin with him; and Cap'n Connie with a glare and a savage snarl, putting out a nimble step for all of his maimed leg, and his white hair that was curled like a bartender's thatch never a bit mussed, though more than one noticed the flicker of red fire in his dark eyes.

SO it went on and on, with the folks all shouting and applauding, some this one and some that, while Micky Briggs scraped away until he had to rest his arms; yet the two of them never stopped, only yelled at him to keep it up. So he picked up a tune again, and faster they went and faster, Cap'n Vesty's face getting redder and Cap'n Connie's face getting whiter, and the feet of them going every which way.

Salty Gallegher, standing in the doorway, remembered the word of the priest and passed it on to the lads.

"The ould divil is totterin' on his pins," said he, pointing to Cap'n Connie. "And would ye note the look in his eye the night! Gallegher's divil he is, and no mistake."

It was there the name got fastened on Cap'n Connie, and "Gallegher's Devil" he was called after that, though later on with more truth than poetry to it.

Well, the two skippers footed it and stepped on until the both of them were staggering. Then the neat white hair of Cap'n Connie suddenly came away and blew off, and lo and behold if it was not a wig! Cap'n Connie gripped for it, but missed, yet he never lost a step but went on dancing, while the white wig lay on the floor. Cap'n Vesty felt of his own hair as though seeing was it still in place, and there was a roar of laughter went up at that.

Perhaps the laugh did it, for without any warning the end came in the middle of a step. Cap'n Connie shut his two eyes and caught at the air, and then down he went in the middle of the floor and lay quiet.

Though Cap'n Vesty dragged up his head, it was seen that Cap'n Connie had fainted dead away, and everybody crowded around with talk and excitement. Through them came Kitty Dunlevy shoving her way. She went to the two and took Cap'n Connie's head in her lap, and looked up at Cap'n Vesty, with anger sparkling in her eye.

"Shame to ye!" said she. "Shame, ye big strappin' Gallegher, to be worryin' a poor old lame man like him into steppin' wid ye! It's all your fault if he dies."

CAP'N VESTY stared down at her, his jaw fallen, and the sweat running down his cheeks.

"Why," he stammered, "Kitty—maybe it's so! I hadn't thought o' that, and I'm sorry."

"Sorrow butters no bread," she shot back. "Get him out o' this."

Cap'n Vesty did it, and put him into a buggy and so to the hotel at the other end of town. All the way Kitty lectured Cap'n Vesty on the bad way he was treating the poor old man, and he a guest, and before they got to the hotel Cap'n Vesty was not a happy man. Cap'n Connie was in bed all the next day, though he was none the worse for his dancing, but Kitty would not leave him get up, and mothered him like a baby. Cap'n Vesty asked the old devil's pardon, and all was friendly as usual with them.

A few days after this, the two skippers went out to the farm by Pisgah, to live there. Big Biddy Callahan, she that was Cap'n Vesty's relative by marriage and crippled in her left leg, came to cook and keep the house neat for the both of them.

Though Cap'n Vesty lived on one of his two farms, still and all he was no farmer, and the place not planted nor cared for the whole year past. He and Cap'n Connie, then, did nothing at all but maybe lay in a trifle of wood, though they talked of buying a fine housed boat and doing some fishing in the fall. True it is, as the saying goes, that idle hands fall to poor ways.

Cap'n Vesty drove the Ford car up and down the road, paid visits here and there, and made no enemies with the money he put out in loans. Though he had good paper and security on every loan, devil a bit did he care about interest or a penny here and there, and always he had a hearty smile and a greeting for the debtor and more money if it was wanted, and don't pay until ye please. Cap'n Connie spent a good share of his days in town, talking with this one and that one, and for all his sharp way men thought well of him, though they did not warm to him; and behind his back the name of Gallegher's Devil stuck hard, half in jest though it was.

HE was always to be found at one of the sheds which ring the curving sweep of the deep bay, talking with men as they mended the brown twine or stretched the lacy white gill nets, or swung them over and over on the squeaky drying frames along the sandy beach. Or if he was not there, he was maybe up at the hotel, sitting in the kitchen and watching the white arms of Kitty Dunlevy knead the dough.

For that matter, Cap'n Vesty was often at the hotel

himself, and always took Kitty out to the church in his car, the church being three miles from town so that folk from the head may get there the easier. He was alone in the taking, for Cap'n Connie went never anigh the church, though he always had a civil word for Father John when they met. There was some hoping that Cap'n Vesty and Kitty would marry, but the McCann girls that helped with the hotel did say how Kitty had a motherly way when Cap'n Connie was around, so that folk began to wonder a trifle.

ONE day when everybody was down on McCann's dock waiting for the mail boat, and she an hour late from Charlevoix, Father John came walking up to Cap'n Vesty, and after the greeting he gave the old skipper a keen glance of his bright eyes.

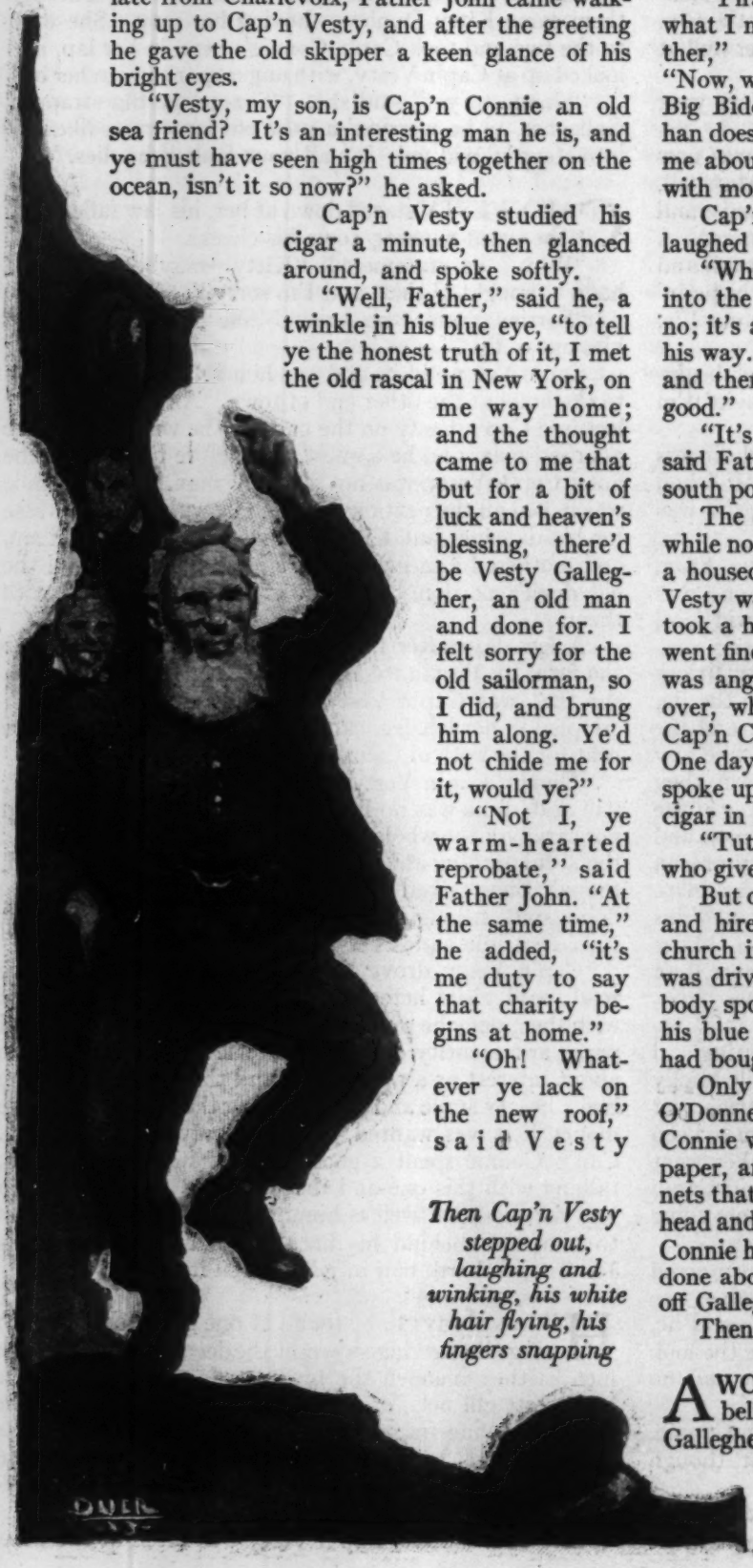
"Vesty, my son, is Cap'n Connie an old sea friend? It's an interesting man he is, and ye must have seen high times together on the ocean, isn't it so now?" he asked.

Cap'n Vesty studied his cigar a minute, then glanced around, and spoke softly.

"Well, Father," said he, a twinkle in his blue eye, "to tell ye the honest truth of it, I met the old rascal in New York, on me way home; and the thought came to me that but for a bit of luck and heaven's blessing, there'd be Vesty Gallegher, an old man and done for. I felt sorry for the old sailorman, so I did, and brung him along. Ye'd not chide me for it, would ye?"

"Not I, ye warm-hearted reprobate," said Father John. "At the same time," he added, "it's me duty to say that charity begins at home."

"Oh! Whatever ye lack on the new roof," said Vesty promptly, "call on me for it, Father."



Then Cap'n Vesty stepped out, laughing and winking, his white hair flying, his fingers snapping

An old man was Father John, twenty year on the island and with many a year before that elsewhere. He looked at Cap'n Vesty and smiled, and shook his head a bit as he spoke.

"That's not what I mean, neither," said he. "Now, what's this Big Biddy Callahan does be tellin' me about you and him playin' cards and gambling with money?"

Cap'n Vesty laid a hand on the priest's shoulder, and laughed softly.

"Whist, now!" said he. "Would ye have it driven into the poor old felly that he's livin' on charity? No, no; it's a proud man is Cap'n O'Brien, and likes to pay his way. See, now, me and him has a bit of a game now and then, and if I lose a trifle o' money, all's well and good."

"It's not warm-hearted ye are, but soft-hearted," said Father John. "Well, there's the boat roundin' the south point at last, so let it pass, and more power to ye."

The days slipped by, and the weeks with them, and while no more was said by the two skippers about buying a housed boat and going to fishing, it was often Cap'n Vesty went out with the lads and helped at the nets, or took a hand pulling stakes as the summer drew on. All went fine at the Pisgah farm, though Big Biddy Callahan was angry at the way Cap'n Vesty let himself be run over, while more than one visitor noticed that it was Cap'n Connie who gave the orders and did this or that. One day when they were alone in the house, Big Biddy spoke up to Cap'n Vesty about it, but he only rolled the cigar in his lips and laughed.

"Tut, tut!" said he. "What difference does it make who gives the orders, Biddy?"

But one Sunday Cap'n Vesty came walking into town, and hired Micky Briggs to get him and Kitty out to church in the jitney, and that afternoon Cap'n Connie was driving the Ford car, and ever after. When somebody spoke of it, Cap'n Vesty rumbled out a laugh, and his blue eyes twinkled, and he said that Cap'n Connie had bought the little car off him.

Only a few days later, a short-time loan to Tom O'Donnell came due; and lo and behold, it was Cap'n Connie who came down to the fish shed and showed the paper, and told Tom to pay up or he'd take the pound nets that were set down, for security. Tom scratched his head and said this and that, and so it came out that Cap'n Connie had bought the paper and there was nought to be done about it. So Tom rustled up the money and paid off Gallegher's Devil.

Then it was that tongues began to wag.

A WONDERFUL thing it was, and mortal hard to believe, but by the end of the summer Cap'n Vesty Gallegher not only had no money, but he was owing every one on the island. Not that it made any difference with him—not a whit! He had the same hearty laugh and twinkle in his eye and the same careless, easy-going way

with him, and nobody knew just what to make of it all.

Sure it is that Kitty Dunlevy did not know, though she tried hard enough. When the whisper got around to her, she took Cap'n Vesty into the hotel kitchen and put him into a chair and asked him where was it all his money had gone. This was the same day he sold the farm down by the head to Salty Gallegher. Cap'n Vesty laughed and lighted a cigar and would have passed the matter off, but Kitty would have none of that.

"Lay off wid your blarney!" she said to him. "You came home a rich man, and Cap'n Connie had nothing. Now it's a poor man ye are, Vesty, and him sittin' by wid the bag. Is that it, now? Has he offered ye no help?"

"Many's the time, to be sure," said Cap'n Vesty. "Would I take money from him? G'wan wid ye, Kitty achree! Ye know I'd not take the poor felly's little store of money, though he'd be glad if I would. What of it? Men go up and come down in the world, lass. Now, if——"

"Oh, ye careless rapscallion!" broke out Kitty, between tears and anger at the manner of him. "Have ye no care for what's gone?"

"Divil a bit!" Cap'n Vesty's blue eyes twinkled. "There's better things in the world to be carin' about than money, Kitty, and you're one of the same. Will ye still give me no answer? Is it the white hair that ye don't like? Then I'll cut it off and get me a fine black wig, all curled up grand and elegant——"

"Vesty, aren't ye in earnest about anything?" cried Kitty, with a stamp of her foot.

"I'M in earnest about you, but what good's it done me?" said Vesty, and that was a true word, for Kitty would give him no answer this long while. "I tell ye now, as I've told ye before this, that for many a weary day I've carried the thought of you over the far ocean, though it seemed that I'd never come home again to tell you of it, and you not married. A foolish thing, it seemed, to be dreamin' about you, Kitty achree, and me sailin' the far seas; but so I did. And now I'm sixty and past, and heaven knows what ye are, though I suppose ye'll never see thirty-five again, whether ye look it or not——"

"Will ye leave off the blarney? Every soul on the island knows I'm goin' on fifty," said Kitty, though her eye softened a little. "Cap'n Connie asked me last night to marry him."

That was a stiff one to Cap'n Vesty. He sat with his cigar in his hand, staring up at her with his blue eyes wide. Then came his laugh, with a roar and a merry word.

"Praise be—the poor old rascal!" said he, shaking with laughter. "Wants to marry you, does he? And him growin' feebler every day! Faith, it's an elegant joke——"

"Do ye think so?" Kitty put her head on one side. "I don't. He's worth two of ye."

That stopped Cap'n Vesty's laugh in a hurry, for the thought of losing Kitty frightened him.

"I s'pose," she went on, "that all this while he's been courtin' me, you've not seen it? Ye poor blessed innocent! Oh, I'd like to shake ye till the teeth rattled! Get out of here. However ye came to command a ship is more'n I can see. Out wid ye, and wake up, and leave me be while I get the dinner in shape."

SHE bustled Cap'n Vesty out of there in a hurry. He found no words until he was in the lobby, and then he looked around as she stood in the dining-room door, gazing after him.

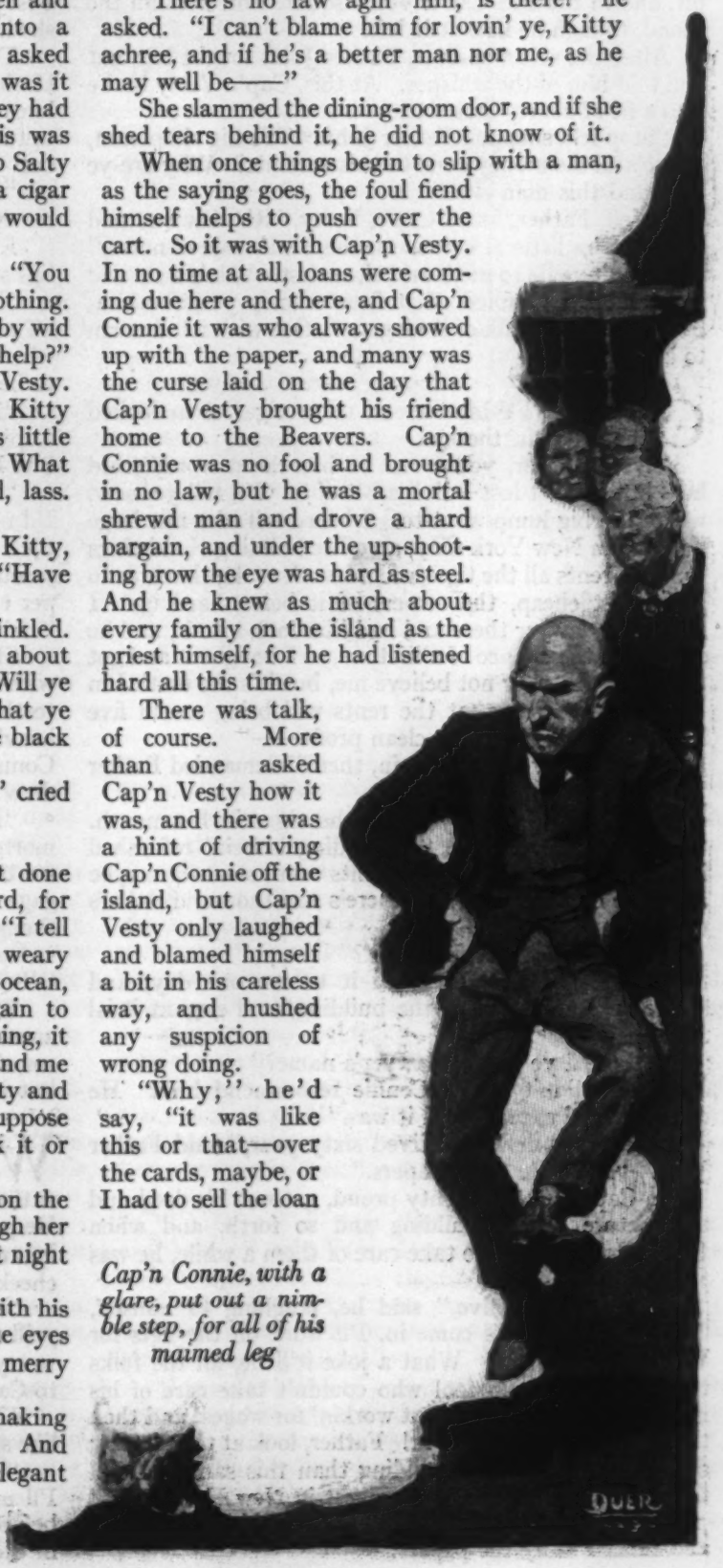
"There's no law agin' him, is there?" he asked. "I can't blame him for lovin' ye, Kitty achree, and if he's a better man nor me, as he may well be——"

She slammed the dining-room door, and if she shed tears behind it, he did not know of it.

When once things begin to slip with a man, as the saying goes, the foul fiend himself helps to push over the cart. So it was with Cap'n Vesty. In no time at all, loans were coming due here and there, and Cap'n Connie it was who always showed up with the paper, and many was the curse laid on the day that Cap'n Vesty brought his friend home to the Beavers. Cap'n Connie was no fool and brought in no law, but he was a mortal shrewd man and drove a hard bargain, and under the up-shooting brow the eye was hard as steel. And he knew as much about every family on the island as the priest himself, for he had listened hard all this time.

There was talk, of course. More than one asked Cap'n Vesty how it was, and there was a hint of driving Cap'n Connie off the island, but Cap'n Vesty only laughed and blamed himself a bit in his careless way, and hushed any suspicion of wrong doing.

"Why," he'd say, "it was like this or that—over the cards, maybe, or I had to sell the loan



Cap'n Connie, with a glare, put out a nimble step, for all of his maimed leg

to him and forgot to take it back. Bless ye, there's nothin' wrong! If I had the money loose, ye could have it this minute. I'll tell Cap'n Connie to go easy—ain't he the good friend to me? Sure, sure. Don't worry."

But finally it got whispered about that Cap'n Connie had old Cap'n Vesty under his thumb and knew of something in the past that could not be told abroad, and was riding him. About this time Cap'n Vesty realized that he owed everybody money, and that folk who lived by the fish had little money to lose, and they facing winter. So he held a grand auction and sold everything that he had in the world, from the farm to the piano; Cap'n Connie bought the farm and all in it, and others bought a bit, and in the end Cap'n Vesty squared off with all the island, though he had little left.

After the sale was over, Father John sought him out and told him of the whisper. At this, Cap'n Vesty broke into a fit of hearty laughter.

"Stop it!" snapped Father John. "Ye big simpleton, where's all the money gone to this summer? Why are ye poor and this man rich?"

"Well, Father," said Cap'n Vesty, "it's this way and that way—a little at cards, maybe, and a sale of notes."

"Don't ye lie to me," said the priest. "He's a shrewd man and has doubled what little money ye gave him; but where's the bulk of it all gone? Out with it! I mean to know."

CAP'N VESTY bit the end off a cigar, then looked the priest in the eye.

"Well, Father, you're not to breathe a word," said he, "but it's not lost—divil a bit of it! I'll tell ye, now, where the big lump went to. I heard tell of a fine large building in New York City, an office building that brings in grand rents all the time and no work to do, that was to be bought cheap, the owners of it being hard up. I wrote to a lawyer there and had him look into it, and he said 'twas the chance of a lifetime, so I bought it and got the deed. Ye may not believe me, but it's the truth I'm tellin' when I say that the rents will bring me in five hundred dollars a month clean profit——"

"Aren't they bringing it in, then?" demanded Father John, with a quick frown.

"No." Cap'n Vesty rolled the cigar in his mouth. "The lawyer writes me the building is bein' refinished inside and done over, and the rents won't start for maybe a month or two yet. But there's ten thousand dollars tied up in it, Father——"

"Where did ye first hear of it?"

"Cap'n Connie mentioned it to me one day, and showed me a picture of the building, and elegant it is! And——"

"Where'd ye get the lawyer's name?"

"Sure, didn't Cap'n Connie recommend him? He did that, and a good deed it was."

"It's a wonder ye've lived sixty year," said Father John. "Let's see them papers."

So Cap'n Vesty, mighty proud, got out his deed and the picture of the building and so forth, and when Father John offered to take care of them a while, he was glad of the offer.

"A man must live," said he, laughing to himself, "and until the rents come in, I'll work on the nets for Willy John. Whist! What a joke it'll be, all the folks thinking I'm an old fool who couldn't take care of his money, and pointing me out workin' for wages, and then the rents'll begin to come in! Father, look at the picture; did ye ever see a finer building than this same? Divil take me if it ain't one of the finest in New York City!"

"That's true enough, and so it is," said Father John, and tucked away the papers.

So Cap'n Connie had the farm to himself now. Cap'n Vesty moved to the hotel, where he did odd jobs and paid something besides for his keep, and went out in Willy John's boat or helped with the nets in the shed for wages. And nobody could understand why the gay twinkle never left his blue eye, nor the smile his lip, and least of all could Kitty Dunlevy understand it.

BUT finally, one night when the chill was coming on and the first fires were being lighted, and the autumn gales were threatening, Cap'n Connie drove up to the hotel in the Ford car, and went into the kitchen for a bit of talk with Kitty. His coming was not known to Cap'n Vesty, who was busy fetching up some wood from the shed.

The greetings over and the two of them alone in the kitchen, Cap'n Connie lighted his pipe and hitched one knee over the other, and looked at Kitty from under that upturned eyebrow of his. Somehow there was a nasty curl to his lip, and the tone of his voice bit.

"Well, Kitty, what is it to be?" said he. "Will ye marry me or not, lass?"

Kitty Dunlevy's bright eye went over him, and her lips set for a moment.

"First I didn't like ye, Cap'n Connie," she said slowly. "Then I felt mortal sorry for an old man, and you feeble with years. And then I never told ye of it, but I tried to be like a mother to ye for the sake o' Vesty——"

"I'd sooner have ye as a wife for me own sake," said Cap'n Connie, and cackled a laugh. The tone of it went into her like a knife, and her face flamed red.

"Gallegher's Divil!" said she. "Get out o' here, for I'd not marry the likes of you if ye was the last man on the Beavers. Take it straight, and the rest of it, too—ye ould thievin' divil, ye! Get out before I lose my temper completely and break good dishes on your bald old head!"

She was a sight to see, as she stood in front of him with her eyes flashing and her face red, and her fine white teeth showing between scarlet lips, and her deep bosom heaving with the anger that shook her. But Cap'n Connie only took a paper from his pocket, and the lip drew back from his teeth as he grinned at her.

"Maybe," said he, "maybe ye'll remember the mortgage that Cap'n Vesty took over? It was made out for three months, and they're up and gone. The mortgage is mine, and by the same token the hotel is mine, though ye may have it for the balance of the summer and welcome. And now what do ye say to bein' Mrs. O'Brien——"

Kitty caught up a plate and let him have it for answer, but Cap'n Connie ducked the plate and it smashed the clock on the shelf. He waited for no more, but went out the door in a hurry.

WHEN Cap'n Vesty came into the kitchen to see what was all the noise about, he found Kitty sitting with her head in her arms and tears on her cheeks. He put his arm about her shoulders and she told him of it, and what Cap'n Connie had said, and laid her wet cheek against his shirt front.

"Praise be!" said he, and patted her hair. "Now ye'll marry me, Kitty achree, and there'll be no more to worry about. Damn the mortgage, lass! I'll say a word to Cap'n Connie, for it's a good felly he is at heart——"

Kitty Dunlevy lifted her tear-wet face, with her eyes like stars, and shoved him away.

"Marry you?" said she. "Who said I'd marry you? I'll marry you the day ye wake up, and not a minute before! Ye've let that ould divil rob ye of everything in the world.

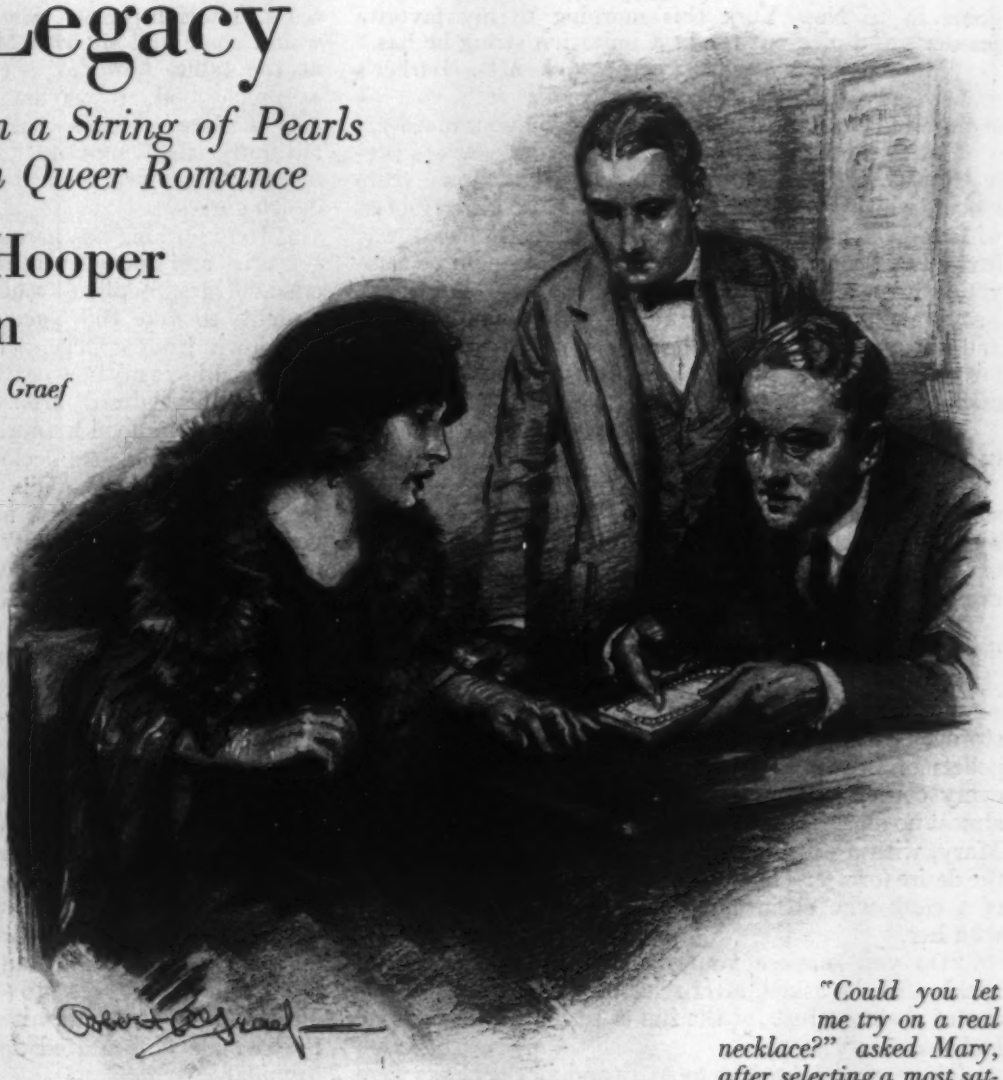
[*Continued on page 124*]

Her Legacy

Mary Spends It on a String of Pearls and Meets with Queer Romance

By Rebecca Hooper Eastman

Illustrations by Robert A Graef



"Could you let me try on a real necklace?" asked Mary, after selecting a most satisfactory one of paste

"L M, N, O, P—Pemberton!" read Mary to herself. Then she announced aloud across the breakfast table to her mother, "Mark Pemberton is dead."

Because it was Mrs. Barker's pleasure that her daughter read the obituaries, at breakfast, Mary always said that her breakfast consisted of coffee, toast and obituaries.

"What has Mark Pemberton done now?" inquired Mrs. Barker.

She was not in the least deaf, but the simpler a fact was, the more it had to be explained.

"He's dead," repeated Mary composedly.

"Does it say what he died of?" asked her mother.

"Yes. He was murdered, some months ago, in an unpronounceable town in an obscure part of Russia."

"Russia?" queried Mrs. Barker, in lively disappointment.

If Mark Pemberton had to be murdered, why couldn't it have happened right here in his home town? It was quite too bad of him to have allowed this thing to occur to him in a place you couldn't even pronounce.

"Where are you going?" inquired Mrs. Barker, as Mary hastily left the table.

"Telephone!" patiently explained Mary, although Mrs. Barker had, of course, heard it, too.

"It was Mark Pemberton's lawyer—calling from New York," said Mary, returning. Her cheeks, with their crimson, belied her calm manner. "Mark Pemberton left me a hundred dollars in his will."

After having it reiterated, Mrs. Barker grasped the unwelcome news.

"Why should that perfectly horrid man leave *you* a hundred dollars?" she demanded. "I hope you realize that it's a reflection on your character."

Mary smiled. She had always entertained a surreptitious admiration for the interesting old devil, and on the rare occasions when they met she had smiled and bowed to him as if he were a human being and not a monster. Once, when she met him suddenly on the twenty-fifth of December, she became extremely bold and wished him "Merry Christmas." Well, he had paid her fifty dollars a word for that moment of friendliness.

"You are disgraced," continued Mrs. Barker, with the enthusiasm of a born scold. "Don't ever tell a soul. Though I suppose it will eventually get into the papers." She bridled with pride as she reflected that, even if it was disgraceful, she would be the center of interest in her set when Mary's legacy became known. In the midst of her new feeling of importance, the corners of her mouth sagged. "If Mark Pemberton was going to disgrace you by leaving you anything, why didn't he make it a hundred thousand? Or a million? He had sixty."

Oh, dear, if the local Mephistopheles only had left Mary a million, Mrs. Barker would taxi straight down and buy that blue Chinese rug that Apthorpe Brothers were showing in their front window!

"STAIRS are the first thing you see when you enter a house," said Mrs. Barker, by way of spending Mary's legacy. "Out of the scores of things we need, a new stair carpet is the most pressing. Go right down to Apthorpe's this morning and get plain mulberry, like Mrs. Stephen French's."

"I am not going to spend my hundred dollars on the house," said Mary, throwing the bomb nicely, with sure aim. "I am going to buy myself a string of pearls."

Mrs. Barker kept her equilibrium by pretending that Mary was joking.

"A hundred dollars wouldn't buy one really good pearl," she said. "You are crazy."

"I don't mean real pearls," replied Mary. "I'm going in to New York this morning to my favorite jeweler's and pick out the best imitation string he has."

"Mary!" The sagging corners of Mrs. Barker's mouth quivered. "I sha'n't always be with you. I should think you'd like to spend a little on your mother."

"Now, mother, you are only fifty, and you are perfectly well, and you will probably be with me forty years longer, which is twice as long as you have already been with me. I gave up that trip to Europe when I was invited and could have had all my expenses paid because you didn't want to be left alone all summer. And now, just as gladly, I am going to buy myself a string of pearls and not a stair carpet. When I go out, I can wear the pearls, and I never shall be reduced to wearing the stair carpet."

"You haven't got the money yet. The will hasn't been probated," said her mother.

"I shall get it this morning. The lawyer said he would advance me a check. Good-by, dear. Read the nice new book I got from the library yesterday. Every one in town is fighting for it, so you ought to enjoy it doubly. And I'll bring you some cakes from Sherry's."

"I HAD no idea," murmured Mary, breathless with delight, "that paste necklaces were so lovely."

Because there were three separate and equally vile storms beating down on New York—a drizzling rain, pellets of sleet, and a gale that jumped at you around every corner and tried to bite off your hat, there was almost no one at all at the great jeweler's. Consequently, Mary, with a crisp hundred-dollar bill in her purse and the desire for pearls in her heart had the amused attention of a clerk who ordinarily would hardly have bothered with her.

"Do you suppose you could let me try on a *real* necklace?" she asked, after selecting a most satisfactory one of paste. "Just for the fun of seeing how a real one looks on *me?*"

There were detectives to spare and all the clerks were bonded, several had begun to hover around with dignified interest, and they let her try on ever so many strings of real pearls. It amused them on this dull off-day, to get out their strings of fabulously expensive pearls and let this winsome Mary try them on.

"It's horribly bourgeoise, but I like my imitation necklace as well as the real ones," announced Mary, when the clerk finally put her purchase in her hand. "No, you needn't wrap it up. I'll wear it now."

Superior smiles were exchanged over Mary's uneducated taste in pearls, and the trays of real pearls were laid away with superior, not to say snobbish, gestures. After Mary's own particular clerk had handed her a sales slip and a rose-leather box in which to keep her common little necklace, he ceased to know that she had ever existed.

Mary, however, thanked him with unnoticed cordiality, fled to Sherry's for cakes, and caught the twelve-seven home.

QUITE as she had anticipated, Mary found Mrs. Barker in the doldrums. Mrs. Barker had had a chill, and Mrs. Barker had neuralgia. Violet, the colored maid, who had overheard the news of Miss Mary's enormous fortune, had asked for a raise, and the furnace man said the coal wouldn't last another week. The novel was a plotless, modern, sordid thing with no one in it you would bother to bow to. Life, concluded Mrs. Barker, reverting to the pet theory of the gloomy-minded, was just a gigantic cat playing with her—a poor helpless little mouse.

No, Mrs. Barker was not interested in looking at any one's imitation pearls. She could eat no lunch, but she would come and sit with Mary while Mary ate. Once at the table, however, she managed to devour twice as much food as her daughter. Such conversational *hors d'œuvres* as Mrs. Barker's never whetted Mary's naturally small appetite. For once she welcomed the interrupting telephone, from which she returned with dancing eyes.

"Here nothing has happened to me for centuries and centuries and now everything is happening at once!" she cried. "Mrs. Stephen French has asked me to dine there tonight, to take the place of her daughter, who can't get down from college. There'll be sixteen. Thank Heaven, I have my new pearls!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Mrs. Barker, replete with cakes and jolted into good humor. "*Now*, at last I shall know whether she uses a tablecloth! See, if you can without getting caught, who made the flat silver. And don't forget to notice how the napkins are folded——Mary, you're paying no attention!"

Of course Mary was paying no attention. It was a great moment. Hadn't it always been one of her dreams to be asked to dine at Mrs. Stephen French's?

"Won't I be ravishing with my pearls?" she asked, happily.

And for a sensible person like Mary to feel certain that she is going to be ravishing, is the first and most important step toward being ravishing.

THE young man at Mary's left had a twinkle in his eye which told Mary, without crudity of words, that he'd be every bit as happy dining at a railway lunch counter if only she were dining there, too. Furthermore, he greatly admired her pearls. He had not said so, but, on being introduced, he had made no bones of staring at them, and he continued to steal constant glances in their direction. Every time his eyes fastened on the pearls, the twinkle disappeared and he became—well—almost formidable.

"Those are very lovely pearls," he said, at last.

"I like them myself. They are new," Mary admitted, gaily. "I bought them only this morning."

"Indeed!" It was only one word, but it was fraught with gravity, not to say reverence. His manner, too, became so definitely respectful that it made Mary uncomfortable.

"It *was* extravagant of me," she said, trying to turn the quality of his interest into something more casual, "but I have never before done anything that wasn't sensible and for the good of all concerned. So when this *little* legacy came"—she stressed the adjective delicately—"I resolved, for once, to be extravagant."

"You are modest, are you not, calling such a legacy 'little'?"

"Well, a hundred dollar——" Mary began, but at his look she stopped, her heart thumping queerly.

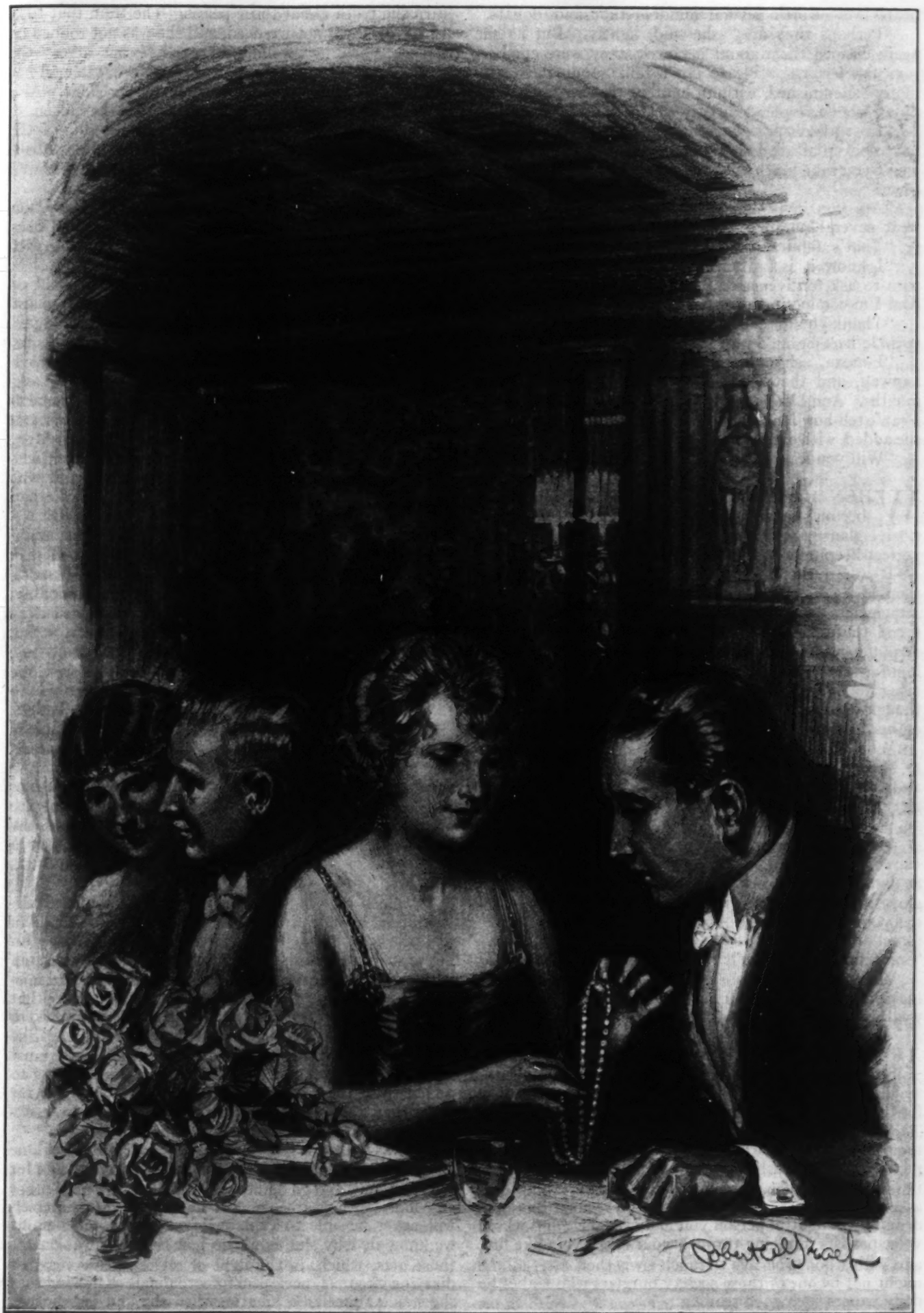
"Pearls have always interested me," he was saying quietly, "but yours is the finest string I have ever seen."

Mary found she was arguing silently, desperately with herself. Well, if she *had*, by mistake, come away with a real pearl necklace, it was not *her* fault. The snobbish salesman had put it in her hand. But of course, the pearls *weren't* real!

"I think," she said to the young man, "that if you will examine these pearls you will discover for yourself what they are."

And she handed him the necklace.

"You are very trusting!" he commented, as he examined them. After a full minute, he added in a low voice, "As a conservative estimate I should say these



"I think that if you will examine these pearls, you will discover for yourself what they are," said Mary to the young man. And she handed him the necklace

pearls were worth several hundred thousand dollars."

"Perhaps they are," she said, lightly. But as she again clasped them about her neck, they were cumbersome as fetters. "Please don't talk about them any more," she finished, with an hauteur that was borrowed direct from a resplendent lady across the table.

"I'm sorry," apologized the young man. "I shouldn't have spoken at all, I suppose. By way of forgiving me, won't you take lunch with me the next time you come in town?"

"Are you inviting me, or a girl who can afford to wear several hundred-thousand-dollar strings of pearls?"

"That's unfair."

"I know it is," Mary agreed contritely. "It's *my* turn to ask forgiveness! I knew you weren't like that. And I'm coming in town tomorrow."

"Thank you for choosing the first possible day." The twinkle here became positively wicked.

"I mean," she stammered, "that I shall go to town, anyway, and that I sha'n't go again for months and months. And I'm not sure I can lunch with you because I can't tell how long I shall be detained at my lawyer's," she added, with dignity.

"Will you let me call you at his office?" he begged.

WHEN Mary mentioned the name of Mark Pemberton's lawyer, the young man gave a last conclusive glance at her pearls, as if their great value was in perfect keeping with the name of her lawyer.

It was during the talk about her pearls that Mary thought again of the strange condition that had been attached to her acceptance of the legacy. She was to spend the money at once, the lawyer had emphasized, or put it aside, and she was immediately to account to him for the use she had made of every penny. She must bring documentary evidence. It was as if the old man, though dead, was curious and wanting to have his hand on her affairs.

When first she heard the condition, indeed, it seemed to Mary like a posthumous acquaintance with the dead and gone plutocrat—almost a grim flirtation across the river Styx.

"Mark Pemberton's legacy has turned your head," declared Mrs. Barker, when Mary came to breakfast the next morning clad in her best and carrying new white gloves. These last, of course, were for the edification of the young man, in case—dreadful misgiving!—he didn't forget to call her up at her lawyer's. "The paper says 'Continued rain.' You'll ruin your only good clothes."

"It's got to clear off because I want it to," said Mary, looking up from the obituaries long enough to give the weather an oracular glance.

IF Mary was radiant in her pretty clothes, it was not because she had slept. For pearls, if by any chance real, are not restful bedfellows. They make you feel for them under your pillow over and over and over again. They cause stealthy sounds in the hall outside your door; they make figures lurk by your windows on the piazza roof. Simultaneously they cause you to wonder, at the time of night when, if you are awake, everything gets askew, whether that young man—who seemed the most definitely delightful person you had ever met, and whose voice persists in racing through your every vein like fire, and with whom you live to lunch—whether, after all, he might not be one of those society burglars who make the daily papers such good reading.

When Mary's bed finally made the port of dawn and the more blessed one of day, she knew that before she went to the lawyer's, or saw the young man, she must learn the truth about those pearls. The train that took her to town was not wrecked, and she was not robbed en route. When her wobbly knees bore her across the jeweler's threshold, the hot air of the store, after all her suspense and excitement, almost made her faint. And at first sight of her, the very clerk who had been so unsparing with his patronage clutched his side of the counter, and turned an unhealthy chalk-white. For a full minute this ghastly person and a pallid Mary stared at each other and swayed.

"I think there has been a mistake," said Mary, unnecessarily. For any one could see that there had been something. And she pushed the rose-leather box with the gold chasings slowly toward him.

With palsied fingers, the clerk opened the box, and gave a glance at its contents that combined horror and beatitude. He didn't dare to believe his eyes, and yet, he *did* believe them.

"How on earth did you find out?" he asked sepulchrally.

When Mary explained, he was obviously overcome at the luck of her meeting some one who knew pearls and her honesty in returning them. Gradually he and Mary came to be surrounded by a grave cordon of men, who spoke in whispers, who examined the pearls, and who stared at poor bewildered Mary. Such a mistake had never happened before! The finest necklace of all!

At last, Mary, embarrassed, inquired if she might again see the tray of imitation necklaces, with a view of finding the one she had chosen the day before. Instead, she was asked to wait—and wait she did, interminably. Finally she announced to the completely humbled clerk that she was in a hurry to keep an appointment at her lawyer's.

Just then a man whom she had not seen before came toward her and said that the firm would prefer not to show her any more hundred-dollar necklaces. And he asked her with a mixture of severity and deference to follow him. Wondering if she was about to be arrested—for the law is a strange thing—Mary followed him into a small room done in platinum velvet. It was guiltless of furniture, save for three French chairs and a table with a velvet top. After Mary was seated in one of the French chairs, the man sat down opposite and put a string of pearls on the velvet-topped table between them.

IT seemed that the firm, by way of showing its appreciation, wished to present Mary with a necklace of real pearls. That is, her hundred dollars was to buy for her a string of pearls worth a trifle over ten thousand. Although not in the same class with the one she had mistakenly worn away the day before, it was a necklace that no one need be ashamed to wear. Or—if Mary preferred, she could have the firm's check for ten thousand. She must not get excited—as if she could help it!—she must not try to thank them, as she was vainly endeavoring to do, because the firm had been prepared to spend far more than that, if necessary, to recover the lost necklace—which was valued at half a million.

At this point the sensible thing for Mary to have done would have been to take the firm's little green check for ten thousand, and go on her way rejoicing and not bother any more with pearls—real or imitation. Mary herself will never be able to explain, in any terms of logic as we know it, why she didn't do just that. It was one of those acts, which, in the light of retrospective years or dizzying circumstance, seem foreordained. Knowing that she was acting like a lunatic, when she and her mother had barely enough to live on, she did not for an instant waver. Unblinkingly she chose the pearls, and, as yesterday, said that she would wear them. A retinue of

grateful, though still abashed, officials bowed her out.

On reaching the street, she was not assailed by the smallest pang. She couldn't even feel selfish, as, according to all known rules for morality, she should have done. Instead, she walked on air, and felt as if Fifth Avenue was the least of her possessions.

"Merry Christmas, Mark Pemberton!" she said, smiling up at the ribbon of blue sky between the tall buildings. For the weather had obeyed her, and cleared.

WHEN she tripped into the lawyer's office, to tell him, according to agreement, what she had done with her legacy, she did not mention the romantic episode at the jeweler's. Even if she had not been asked to keep the matter quiet, she felt that it was too immense a happening to discuss. She would tell her mother some day when she felt capable of explaining and reëxplaining, and she would some day tell the young man, because he was one of the chief causes of her good fortune.

"You spent every cent on a string of pearls for yourself?" questioned the lawyer, staring unbelievingly.

"Yes, and this is my necklace," answered Mary, hoping he didn't know pearls.

The lawyer gave the jewels an unseeing glance, and at the same time disconcerted Mary by looking every bit as excited as if he knew what had happened about the pearls.

"Mark Pemberton's will," he began, "will always be one of the curiosities of the legal world. He remembered over two hundred people who had been kind to him—judges, waiters, bootblacks, and actresses, all without regard to rank. But to four people beside yourself, Miss Barker, he left one hundred dollars with the same string attached that is attached to your legacy."

"Who were the other four?" inquired Mary, uneasily wondering what sort of company she was in.

"One was the doorman of his favorite club; another a conductor on the train on which he commuted for years; a third was one of the richest men in New York, whom he did not know personally, but whom he admired; and the fourth was a perfectly proper and desperately forlorn errand girl in a Fifth Avenue shop where he bought his gloves. These four, in contrast to you, spent their legacies in a way that the world would call wise. The doorman at the club applied his to the mortgage on his farm; the train conductor bought coal with his; the rich man sent his to the Fund for the Neediest; and the little errand girl paid some old doctors' and dentists' bills." He paused, and looked at Mary.

"In the general average, then, I have shown myself shallow and selfish?" asked Mary, who, even now, had no compunctions.

"Mark Pemberton wouldn't have said so. He doesn't say so—in his will. For he is still playing his ironic jokes on men. It was in toying with men's well-known proclivities that he met his tragic death. He derived the greatest amusement out of making his will, because he adored placing people in extraordinary circumstances and seeing how they would behave."

Here the lawyer's excitement rose to such a pitch that he crossed the room and thirstily gulped down two glasses of spring water.

"Miss Barker," he said, as he came back, "Mark Pemberton made those five bequests because he wanted to remember five people whom he liked, and he attached the string to the legacy because of his theory that so small a legacy as one hundred dollars ought to be used not for necessities or charities or to pay old bills, but that it should be spent for some specific and definite pleasure. What you and I think of his theory does not matter. The facts are our concern. You, Miss Barker, are the only beneficiary who spent his money in the way Mark Pembertonapproved. And most people would say he was wrong in rewarding you."

As Mary told her story, the countenance of Mrs Barker became a battleground of the emotions

"Reward!" cried Mary. "Am I to be rewarded for buying myself a string of pearls?"

The lawyer glanced helplessly about the room, and gave up trying to conceal his excitement. Then he went on quickly to the astounding fact.

"If the doorman at the club had laid in a supply of expensive cigars, if the conductor had taken a box at the opera, if the errand girl had bought herself a hundred-dollar French hat, and if the rich man had been clever enough to conjure up some way in which even he could have been both extravagant and festive, they would each, like yourself, have received an additional legacy of one million dollars."

WHEN it was out, at last, the staid lawyer rose to his feet, and so did Mary.

"Is it *true?*" she asked at last, in a whisper. "Because I flung it all away on a string of pearls? A *million* dollars?"

"Yes," said the lawyer drily, "it is true." And then

they both sat down and the lawyer became himself.

"For your peace of mind, Miss Barker," the lawyer continued, "I must tell you that Mark Pemberton generously endowed hospitals and museums and colleges. He gave to institutions, and he took pains to remember his remotest relatives. His home town has been handsomely taken care of and also his church."

"I'm very glad," said a small-voiced Mary.

"So you needn't worry about taking your million. Now, there's just one thing before you go. A million dollars is not at all like a hundred dollars. It is a sum that you will have to have expert advice in handling. I shall be glad to look after your legacy, but you mustn't feel that it's obligatory. Don't try to decide anything definitely—today. I will run out and see you early next week, and you can then decide what changes, if any, you wish to make in your mode of living."

IT would be irrelevant, and it would sound picayune to the distinguished lawyer, if, right on the heels of inheriting a million, you should ask if a young man had called you up. And yet—the young man was so much more interesting than the million, and the suspense was getting unbearable.

Yes, the young man had called Mary up. He had said that unless he heard to the contrary he would meet Mary at Pierre's, at one.

Though it was a minute to one, and Pierre's was several blocks away, Mary paused to ask a question. For not until that question was answered would she be able to swallow a mouthful of lunch.

"Do they—the glove-counter girl and the conductor and the doorman—know what they missed by spending their legacies wisely?" she asked.

"Mark Pemberton was sardonic, but he was not cruel. Not one of them knows or ever will know," the lawyer answered gravely.

The lunch went on and on and on until every one else had left the room, and the waiter, after a handsome tip, departed also. Mary and the young man presently changed from being the last of the lunchers to the first of those having tea.

During lunch and tea Mary said nothing of her legacy or her pearls. There were more important things to talk about. Such as what you liked and what he liked and how queer it was that never before had either of you met any one who liked just what you liked. How you wanted two houses, one a great big, grand, wonderful house where you could go when you felt grand and wonderful or wanted to entertain your friends, and the other just a little one, whither you could repair when you were tired of the world and its pomp and show. In the little toy house you would do everything yourself, even to getting al fresco breakfasts. You would live most of the time in the little house.

WHEN this newest pair of mating lovers left Pierre's at last and walked through one of the little side streets that play *Rue de la Paix* to New York, Mary found that a curious transformation had taken place in the alluring shop windows. Now that she could buy anything, she didn't want anything. It was the not being able to have things that made you want them so desperately. But a voice within her cried, "You needn't think you're so wonderful! You only feel this way because you are falling desperately in love with this young man who is, you fear, going to say good-by the next minute. If it weren't for him, you'd be off on an orgy of spending."

As it happened, the young man didn't want to say good-by, either, so, without discussion, they boarded the five-fifty for home. When they had taxied up from the station, the young man accepted Mary's invitation to dine. He was undaunted by her warning that she was not one of those who are waited upon by processions of servants with silver dishes, and that she feared the vegetable, that night, was parsnips.

"It isn't done!" said Mrs. Barker, to Mary, in her room. "It just isn't done. Lunch, tea and dinner, all in the same day. You have no finesse, Mary. He's one of the rich Gilberts, too, and he'll slip through your fingers."

After dinner, in the shabby living room, a beatific Mary on one side of the fire faced a similarly minded young man on the other. Mrs. Barker sat cheating herself at Canfield, and wondering why Mary had broken the household rule and given the guest the seat that commanded the best view of the worn-out stair carpet.

"Those are not the pearls you wore last night," said the young man, at last. "They're good—but not *as* good."

"No," said Mary. "I'll tell you about these, and I'll tell you about last night's, and then I'll tell you something else. It will take all your credulity, mother, to believe me."

The young man stared at Mary, unmoved, as she told her story, but the countenance of Mrs. Barker became a battleground of the emotions. For once, the facts did not have to be revamped for her. Mrs. Barker adored the facts, as stated.

"I have decided to divide my legacy with the conductor and the errand girl and the doorman," concluded Mary. "That will give us each two hundred and fifty thousand. But the rich man wouldn't know what to do with any more money. It's an art to know how to spend money."

"An art I'd like to try," moaned Mrs. Barker, who hated the end of the story as much as she liked its beginning. "Give away three quarters of a million! Why, Mary, you're crazy!"

"THAT'S just what you said when I made up my mind to buy pearls with my hundred."

Mrs. Barker turned pale.

"So I did, Mary. It gives me the shivers to think how I besought you to get a stair carpet. Maybe you're right to go throwing around your million. I don't know."

After she had gone, bewildered and thankful, to bed, Mary and the young man sat in the only sensible way—under the circumstances—holding hands.

"It was no more than fair—to give those others their slice," said the young man, admiringly. "Just as it was no more than fair that the jeweler should insist on rewarding you."

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" said Mary.

"You must be awfully tired." How wonderful it is when you find some one who cares when you are tired!

"I am tired," she admitted, happily. "But I was just thinking——"

"What?"

"How different things might have been if Mrs. French hadn't invited me to dine!"

"Or if you'd bought the mulberry stair carpet instead of the pearls," suggested the young man, rather diffidently.

"Oh—that!" It was easy to see that Mary had no time to waste on a mere legacy at such a moment.

"You darling!" breathed the young man in a small ear that was suddenly close to his lips. And he added, with a twinkle: "But, Mary, you'll have to curb your desire for pearls now, and start to buy—stair carpets!"

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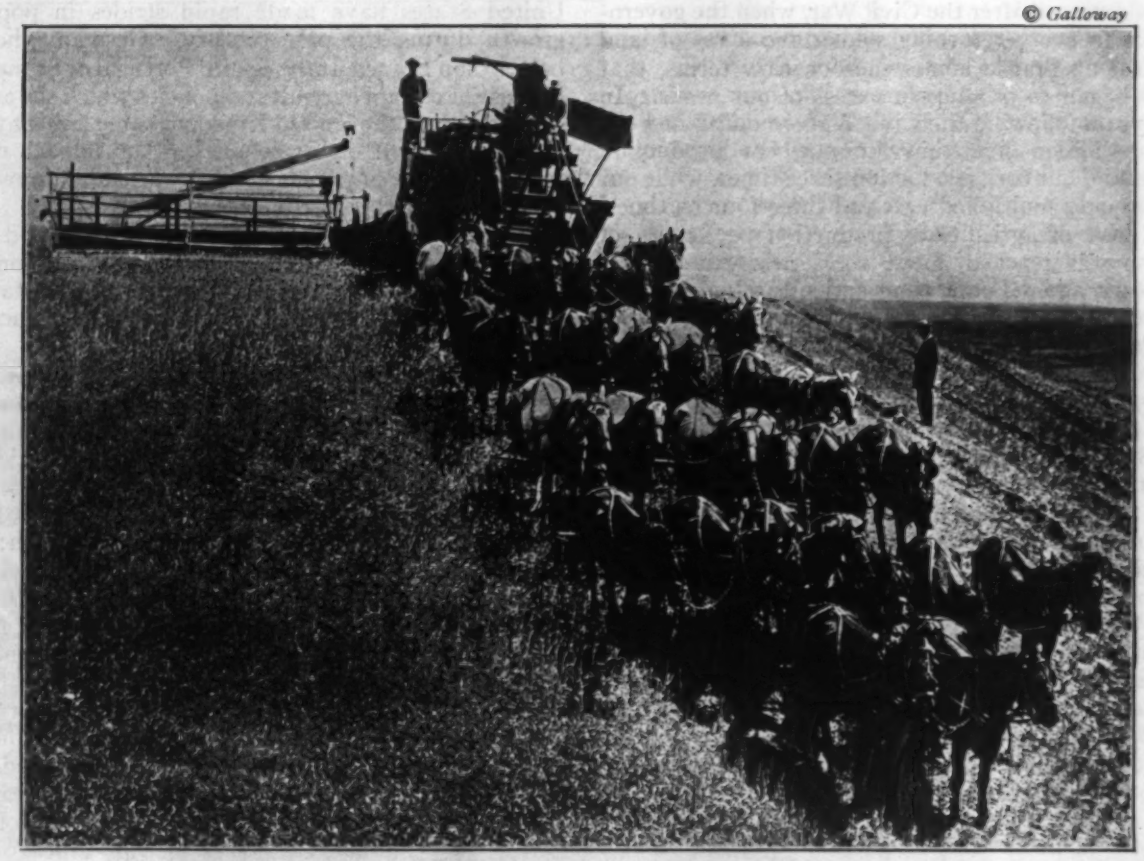


A 33-horse combined harvester and thresher in a Washington wheat field

The Farmer at the Crossroads

Has He Reached a Crisis that Endangers National Prosperity?

By Orville M. Kile

AGRICULTURE in the United States is just now entering upon a new and most critical stage. Whether we shall preserve and develop a robust and virile agricultural population or whether our basic industry shall languish and wither, depends upon the public policy adopted and established during the next decade or two.

Seventy-five years ago England faced much the same question. At that time she deliberately decided upon a policy that brought ruin to her agricultural production and completely changed the character of her agricultural population.

Fifty years ago Germany approached the same question, but with a different viewpoint. She adopted a policy that built up her agriculture and preserved a strong, solid, conservative element of her population which has ever proved her bulwark in the troublous times that have intervened.

Which pathway the United States will choose is of far greater importance to our future as a nation than most of us realize. And the time for a decision is close at hand.

Sooner or later in the life of every nation the question, "Shall we grow our own food supply or shall we buy it where we can get it the cheapest?" has arisen.

Frequently this question translates itself into the slightly different form, "Is the farmer to be considered merely as an instrument to supply the cheapest possible food to industrial workers, or is he to be considered a major factor in the social community with the power to charge enough for his product to assure himself equal social advantages with his urban brother?"

Various socialist leaders in Europe are today insisting that the farmer's function is merely to provide as cheap a food supply as possible for the workers of the cities.

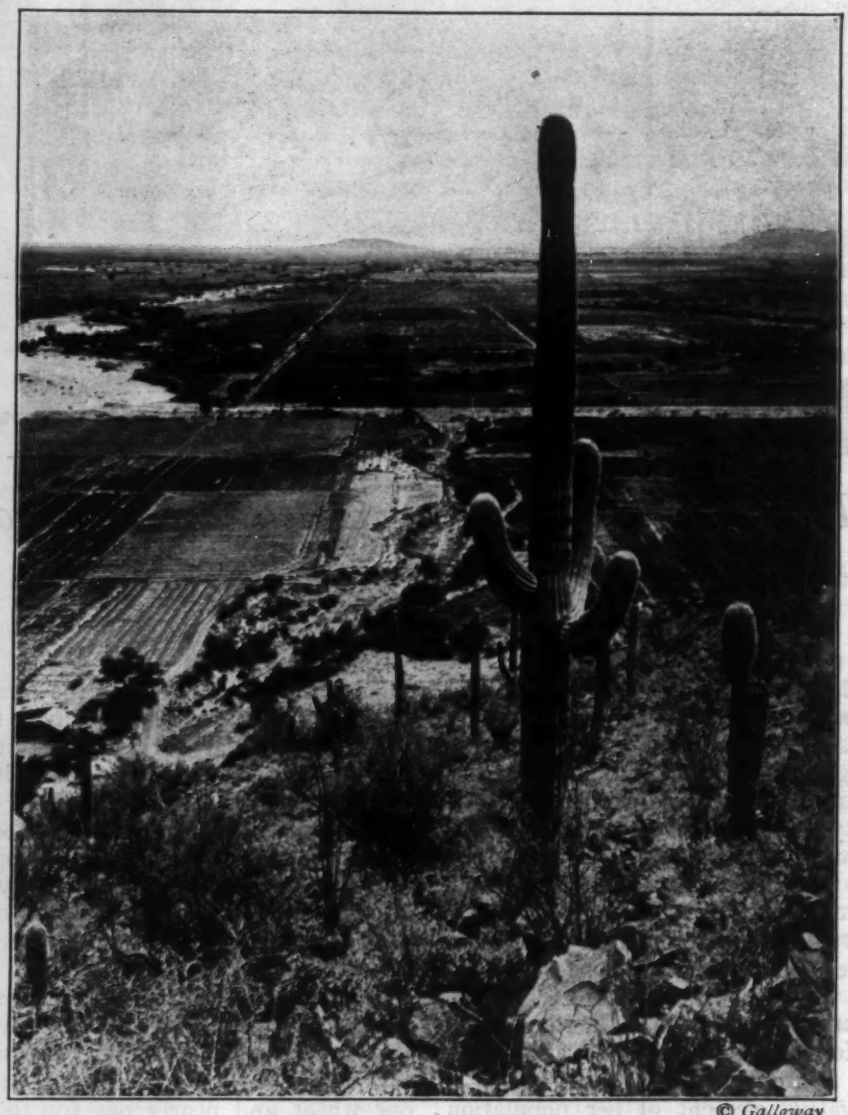
But why are we, here in broad, rich, expansive America, particularly concerned in this problem at this time? Haven't we a surplus of cheap foods and other agricultural products? Haven't we great open spaces that can be utilized for food production? Isn't it true that today we export one half our cotton, one fourth our wheat and nearly one fourth our pork products? Why is this a critical period? Why should we worry now?

Perhaps our recent spurt of production under stimulus of wartime prices has blinded us to our true situation. The bald, bare fact is that already we import more food, measured in dollars, than we export, *and within a short time*—estimated by experts at ten to twenty years—*we shall cease to be a food-exporting nation.* That is, unless some extraordinary changes in methods and public policy are introduced.

It was not until after the Civil War, when the government gave to every returning soldier 160 acres of land and opened up prairie homesteads on easy terms, that we really began to produce in excess of our needs. In the fifty years following the Civil War we multiplied our cotton production five times, our wheat production four times and our corn production three times, while our population only multiplied two and three fourths times. But the peak of agricultural production per capita of population was reached about 1905, nearly a quarter of a century ago. For a time agricultural production almost kept pace with population increase, but during the last decade previous to the war, it steadily fell behind.

Effect of Agricultural Production on Population

THIS failure of agricultural production to keep pace with population is not due primarily to the decrease in the proportion of our population engaged in agriculture—although this reduction has been large—but is owing mostly to a notable decrease in the rate of expansion of our arable areas. Improved land areas increased barely 5 per cent during the decade 1910 to 1920, as compared with 15 to 50 per cent in previous decades. And even this 5 per cent increase was located almost entirely in the precarious semi-arid lands of the Great Plains region.



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A vista of desert plains near Tucson that have been turned into rich farms by irrigation

Our nation has just passed its three-hundredth birthday, an infant compared with other nations of the earth. In 1790, when our first census was taken, we boasted less than 3,000,000 people; in 1820, at the close of our second century, we had less than 10,000,000 population. In the century just passed we have increased almost 100,000,000 as against the 10,000,000 for the entire two centuries before. Statisticians have estimated that our population at the close of the present century should be more than 220,000,000.

If we study the history of our own rapid increase in population and the history of population movements in European countries during the past century, we soon see that rapid increase in population is largely dependent upon surplus food production. Only Russia and the United States have made rapid strides in population growth during the past century. Germany did much better than France, Italy, Spain, Portugal or Scandinavia, because of certain agricultural policies which she adopted. The growth of the United Kingdom came largely through the development of her colonies. And in each case the rate of increase of population has varied in almost direct proportion to the relative food supply.

We can only judge the future by the past, and history seems to indicate clearly that as soon as a nation passes from the ranks of surplus food producer to the status of a food-importing nation the rate of population increase is rapidly modified.

The United States has been an excess food producing nation so long that until very recently few thinkers have considered the possibility of any other condition.

What would a fundamental change of this kind mean to our national life? Let me quote Doctor E. D. Ball, Director of Research for the United States Department of Agriculture, who writes with conviction:

"It would mean a reorganization of our entire national life. It would mean that the farmer's interest in foreign markets would have disappeared. It would mean that the price of wheat in Chicago would be the price in Liverpool *plus* the cost of moving it from Liverpool to Chicago—whereas now the price in Chicago is the price in Liverpool *less* the cost of moving it to Liverpool. It would mean that manufacture and industry which have been moving westward toward the source of cheap and abundant food would begin to move back toward the Atlantic seaboard, if the food must come from beyond the waters. It means even more than that. As time went on they would move to surplus-producing nations where more favorable conditions for their development can be found.

"The question of whether Chicago—and when I say Chicago, I mean *any* city in the United States—the question of whether Chicago in the next hundred years is going to be a city of 4,000,000 people or 10,000,000 depends on whether this nation continues to be an excess food producer or drops back to the food-importing condition of the old countries."

But why is this question of the future of agriculture,

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Two ways of plowing—American and European. Do we want progressive farming in this country, or a return to peasant conditions?

and consequently the future of the nation, so acute just at this time?

The reason is, as Secretary Wallace, of the Department of Agriculture, has pointed out, because we are "entering a new era in American agriculture. The people of America have until very recent years—since the war—been fed at a price below the actual cost of producing farm crops, if all of the factors which properly enter into that cost are considered and if the farmer should be allowed a wage no larger than the wage paid the cheapest labor."

It has been repeatedly stated that the only profit the farmer has ever made in this country has come from the rise in land values. Land values in Iowa doubled during the decade 1900-1910 and again from 1910 to 1920. But there is no reason to expect any further material increments of this kind, except in special cases. The future has already been largely discounted. Henceforth agriculture must stand on its own feet as a profit-producing business, if it is to compete with the cities. Failure so to compete in recent years has been the chief reason for the rapid migration from country to city. Today only 40 per cent of our people live in the country, whereas three decades ago nearly two thirds were classed as rural.

Despite the use of improved machinery, improved seed and improved farming methods—the products of our elaborate system of agricultural colleges and experiment stations—crop yields per acre have barely held their own. Taking the country as a whole, acre yields would show a decrease were it not for the fact that considerable areas in the Eastern States that should never have been put in cultivation have been allowed to revert to pasture or woodland. This raises the average for the remaining acres. But, even so, the ravages of "exploitation" farming have so reduced the natural fertility of the great Mid-West that the average yield has barely held its place. The use of fertilizers is rapidly becoming universal.

Difficulties of Farming Today

THE farmer today has constantly to fight the depredations of new insects and plant diseases. He must spray and dust and disinfect and in the end make liberal contributions to these pests, where formerly he was free from most of this expense and loss.

Freight rates are high and must remain high until some radical change is made in our transportation system. Perhaps electrification may eventually bring about cheaper freight rates and water transportation may ease up the burden somewhat, but high transportation costs apparently have come to stay.

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All this can mean but one of two things to agriculture, barring possible exceptional scientific developments: Either food must become higher in price or the American farmer must lower his standard of living—perhaps even approach the level of the European peasant.

Already Argentina is knocking at our doors with cheaper beef and corn than we can produce. Certain cheap grades of cotton were being imported before the

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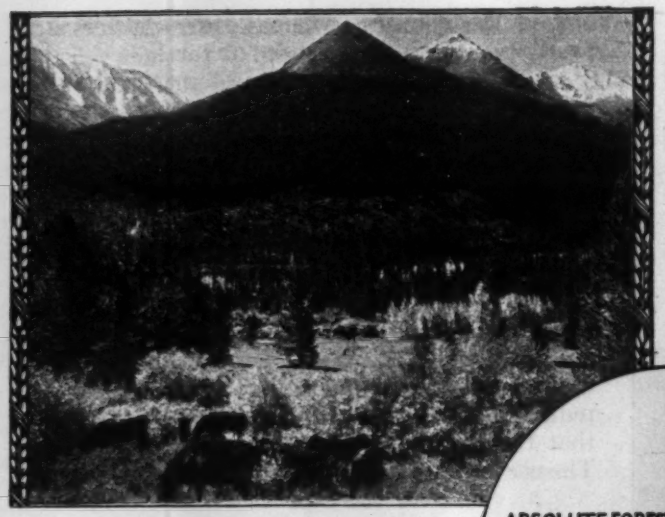
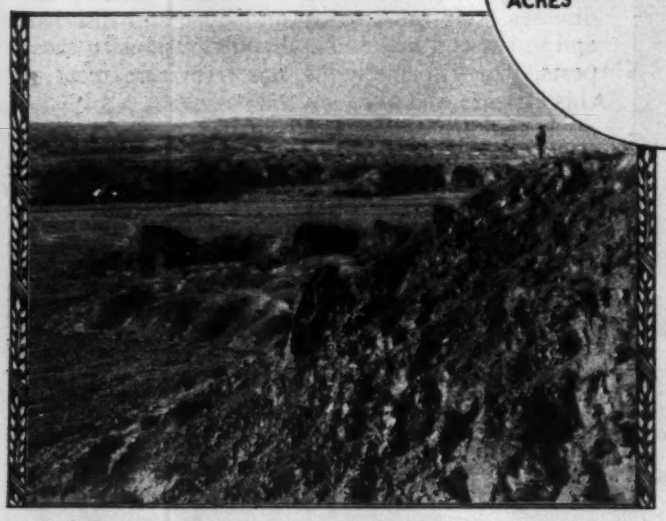


IMPROVED LAND 503 MILLION ACRES
ABSOLUTE FOREST GRAZING AND DESERT LAND 1,100 MILLION ACRES
POTENTIAL IMPROVED LAND 300 MILLION ACRES

Of our total area of 1900 million acres, the majority is desert, forest or grazing land unfit for production of food crops

Our improved land which may yet be made productive by draining or irrigation is a surprisingly small section of the whole



war. Before the emergency tariff went into effect, China and Manchuria let loose a flood of soy bean and peanut oils on us that all but ruined our own producers of these products. Frozen eggs from the Orient sent the California poultrymen hot-footing it to Washington for tariff protection. Cheap wool from Australia and other distant countries has been a bone of contention for twenty years.

The Problem of Cheap Food

THE farmer got tariff protection this time—much of which is useless—partly because of his new-found power with Congress and partly because the manufacturer wanted protection and needed the farmers' votes to get it. But if present indications materialize, American manufacturers will before long find themselves in strong competition with the hard-driven, cheap-living workers of Europe in the markets of the world where there is no tariff wall to help them.

Then will come the demand for cheap food—for food from the cheapest source, regardless of the effect upon American agriculture. Then and there the United States will decide her future.

The great Macaulay, writing to an American correspondent nearly seventy-five years ago, pointed out in a striking way the problem that would be faced by this country when our free land and cheap food were gone:

"As long as you have a boundless extent of fertile and unoccupied land your laboring population will be found more at ease than the laboring population of the Old World; but the time will come when wages will be as low and will fluctuate as much with you as they do with us. Then your institutions will be brought to the test. Distress everywhere makes the laborer mutinous and discontented and inclines him to listen with eagerness to agitators who tell him that it is a monstrous iniquity that one man should have a million while another cannot get a full meal. . . .

"The day will come when multitudes of people, none of whom has had more than half a breakfast or expects to have more than half a dinner, will choose a legislature. Is it possible to doubt what sort of legislature will be chosen? There will be, I fear, spoliation. The spoliation will increase the distress; the distress will produce fresh spoliation. Either civilization or liberty will perish. Either some Caesar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand, or your Republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the twentieth century as the Roman Empire in the fifth."

Macaulay wrote thus vividly because his own country was at that time face to face with this same problem. England's great industrial era was then well under way, her cities were filled with poorly paid and poorly housed laborers who were making the goods at prices that enabled England to capture the markets of the world.

The farms of England were unable to meet the demands for food, the Socialist elements in the cities

were demanding cheap foreign foods, and mill owners also desired the cheapest possible source of food to enable them to produce their goods still more cheaply.

Richard Cobden was the exponent of the theory of cheap food in the British Parliament, and in the end his arguments prevailed. The Corn Laws—protective tariffs—were repealed and England entered upon a deliberate policy of industrial development, regardless of the dire effects upon agriculture. True, Cobden relied upon the costs of transportation to act as a shield to the English farmer, but when presently the invention of Bessemer steel and the development of steel railroads and ships cut transportation costs on grain from ten shillings per quarter to ten pence per quarter, no compensating protection was given the English farmer.

Possibly this was good statesmanship on England's part. Undoubtedly it helped her to take her position of dominance in the industrial world. But hear also the comments of the Earl of Denbigh, writing in 1910:

"While there is no denying the boon of cheap food to the poor, we must not forget the price we have had to pay for it. The shrinking in the number of those employed in agriculture in England and Wales from two million to less than half that number; the laying down to grass of some four and a half million acres that fifty years ago were usable; the steady transfer of workers from the country to the towns, and the deterioration of our national physique are all a part of the price fixed by the nation.

"Whereas we formerly grew enough wheat for twenty-four million people, we now produce only sufficient for four and a half millions. In other words, only one in ten of our forty-five millions are fed with British-grown food."

Denbigh then went on to speculate on the situation in a way which proved to be almost prophetic. He said:

"The blind self-assurance of the nation and its rulers seems appalling when we appreciate the facts that have long been patent to most thinking men in the country, and realize how we might find ourselves placed in the event of war. If only we could sink our miserable party politics; if only some strong big man would arise and make the dwellers in our towns realize how our national existence may one day be found to be bound up with the maintenance of our agriculture! We count our Dreadnaughts and we forget that Dreadnaughts by themselves no more make a navy than artillery constitutes an army. We talk of our ability to keep our trade routes clear of the enemy and we ignore the effect that would be produced by the appearance on those routes of even a few fast liners armed with the lightest of guns.

"What would be the almost immediate effect upon our narrow six weeks' food supply? An instant rise in insurance and freights, a corresponding rise in the price of all food, entailing starvation on the poor, would cause a situation which might become unendurable if prolonged, even before a single naval fight had taken place."

© *Fotograms*

Symptom of the farmer's discontent — Magnus Johnson, new Farm-Labor Senator from Minnesota

Farmer Class the Backbone of the Nation

HOW near the German submarines came to a realization of Denbigh's worst fears in 1916, even we on the other side of the Atlantic still prefer not to recall.

Perhaps we, with our much greater land area and the oceans to protect us, might never need the farmer for exactly the same reason that England so sorely needed him in 1916. But there are other and perhaps more important reasons why a virile, prosperous agriculture is the only secure basis for national existence.

Doctor W. E. Heitland, in his recent book, "Agricola," says that an examination of history shows there are three great reasons why the farmer has been highly regarded by rulers and statesmen throughout the centuries:

First, we find the purely economic reason. Food must be supplied. Second, farmers' sons have always been regarded as the best material for soldiers. And, third, men whose lives and interests are bound up with agriculture are a steady class, little inclined to wild, restless agitation and rash ventures. They early learn to obey nature's laws; they know and sympathize with the laborer yet have a wholesome respect for property rights.

The merits of the farmer class as "safe" citizens—the backbone of a wise and durable state life—became almost a commonplace in Greek political theory.

At the time when Rome began her long, last plunge into darkness we find the soundest thinkers most alarmed at the decay of agriculture—in that case, too, brought on chiefly by the importation of cheap foreign foods. The resulting depression drove the farmers away from their lands and into the cities.

Tiberius said a little later, "Italy stands in need of

foreign supplies, and yet who is considering how much the Commonwealth is every day at the mercy of the wind and waves? The produce of colonies is imported to feed the landlord and his slaves. Should these resources fail, will our groves and our villas support us?"

These resources did fail and the same economic decline set in as had previously overtaken Greece. Everywhere industrial and commercial cities were decaying because their populations were losing the virility that formerly came from fresh injections of country blood. Population dwindled. The city of Rome became notorious for its corruption, statesmen complained of its immorality. Historians believe this moral disintegration was largely due to the disappearance of the self-supporting, self-respecting farmer class, and the concentration of wealth in the hands of the upper class.

How Germany Met the Cheap Food Problem

IN the last days of the Empire extreme measures were adopted to prevent the further abandonment of the land. But all to no avail. The cities were beyond help. They fell into decay. The damage had been done. And when the barbarians came in from the north the once-proud Roman Empire could offer but feeble resistance.

The so-called "physiocrats" in France in the eighteenth century and the much-quoted Adam Smith, in England, likewise pointed out the basic importance of agriculture as nation-making and nation-sustaining material.

In the light of these historical observations, it is particularly interesting and significant to note that in troubled Europe today the ruling bodies lean heavily on the farmer for stability. The cities teem with restless, ruthless socialists. It is only the restraining force of the agricultural classes that holds them in check, or, as in the case of Russia, lets them go their separate way, but calmly disregards their attempts at radical government. When the government of Switzerland recently had occasion to quell a Socialist uprising they called in the farmers' sons to do it. They have a saying in Switzerland today that "The Swiss cabinet has only six members, but there is a seventh—Ernest Lauer, president of the agricultural association—more powerful than all the rest."

Now let us take a hasty glance at the way in which Germany met this problem of pressure for cheap food, yet preserved her agriculture.

About 1875, the rural districts in Germany were beginning to feel the effects of that rapid drift of population to the towns and to foreign countries, which was to complicate all German economic problems for the next forty years. Technical development of agriculture had made good progress since 1830. In fact, Germany was the leader in scientific agricultural development at that time. By this means she had maintained her food needs.

Then, within a single decade, she changed over completely. She ceased to be a food-exporting country and began to feel the whole pressure of foreign competition of the modern sort in her foodstuff markets.

"Those twenty years from 1870 to 1890 were the deciding years for Germany," says the eminent English economist, J. H. Clapham. "The seas were open and rails had linked her to the Polish and Hungarian plains, the Russian black earth zone, and the cornlands of Rumania."

Fortunately for the future of German agriculture, Bismarck was then at the helm. Himself a product of the soil, he understood the problem and was sympathetic, even though his immediate motives may have been fiscal and political. He argued that low grain prices were in the end harmful to the entire nation.

Various stringent tariff laws were enacted following 1879; liberal and active support given to scientific agricultural development—and Germany's agriculture was saved during practically the same period that England's went to ruin. Until 1914, Germany produced the bulk of her own foodstuffs and maintained a virile, free agrarian population which was her main strength.

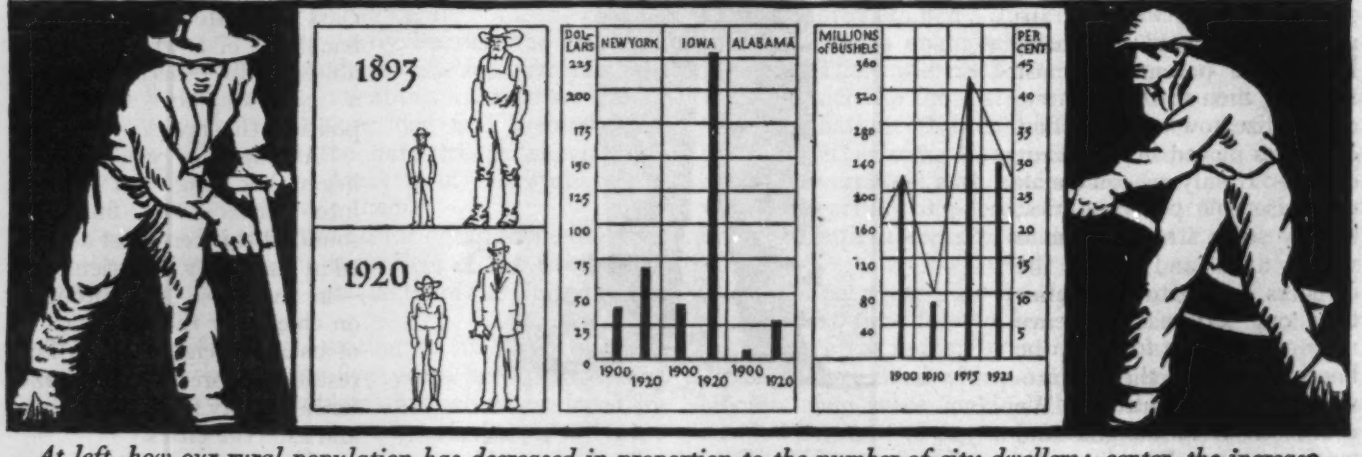
It is interesting to note that while the agrarian group, which was powerful in the Reichstag, was largely instrumental in securing the adoption of this protective policy, yet it had the support of leading thinkers of the cities.

How Will America Decide This Question?

IT was our own Theodore Roosevelt who said:

"If there is one lesson taught by history it is that the permanent greatness of any State must ultimately depend more upon the character of its country population than upon anything else. No growth of cities, no growth of wealth, can make up for a loss in either the number or the character of the farming population."

We are entering this critical period in our national life right now. How will America meet it? Will our statesmen be big enough and broad-minded enough to see the long-time answer clearly? Will enlightened public opinion endorse and uphold their decision to adopt a policy of adequate protection and encouragement of our agriculture—even at some expense to present urban development? Or must we soon begin to travel the downward path that so many other world powers have trodden before us?



At left, how our rural population has decreased in proportion to the number of city dwellers; center, the increase of farm land values in representative regions; right, how our exports of wheat are falling off

The repaired features of four disfigured veterans treated by Doctor Gillies. The faces at extreme left and right were without any nose at all when treatment began, the profile being as shown in inserts. The other two were hideous nightmares, minus mouth and jaw

New Faces for Old

How Surgeons Are Sculpturing Human Flesh to Repair Disfigured Features

By Zoë Beckley

WE all wonder sometimes—we of the conquering countries—what good things, if any, the Great War bestowed upon the world.

Different people give different answers to the question. But all must agree—even the countries which didn't win—that one magnificent benefit has been reaped from the red harvest of battlefields: the amazing progress achieved by surgery.

In the anguish of 1914, unheard-of experiments were attempted in desperation, and out of desperation came the beginning of miracles.

Men didn't mind dying for their countries; but it was a hideous anticlimax to live, deprived of all that made life worth while; to go on existing as a mere human log, without arms or legs; to live without eyes, but beyond all other horrors to live without a face. Because of that divine desperation of the surgeons—desperation born of sympathy which is imagination—men who were already skilled before the War became magicians. Still young themselves, many of them, surgeons realized even early in 1914 the utter tragedy of disfigurement for youth, and put their whole souls into the work of lightening the gloom.

There had, of course, been cases of disfigurement in other wars, before the day of the new men who would not "resign themselves to the inevitable," as elder generations had done. In old days, resignation had to begin where skill left off. But the surgeons of 1914, confronted with a task immeasurably bigger than any known to the world before, regarded resignation as a crime, not a virtue. As to the word "inevitable," it was banished from their vocabulary.

"We must succeed. We must save these boys who've given themselves for us all, save them from despair worse than death." That was their slogan, also their prayer. And the will to succeed forced success so brilliant as to be all but incredible even now, to those who have not seen the living proof with their own eyes.

These marvels were brought about in all branches of surgery during the war—years which gave experience hitherto undreamed of. But the wonder and drama of facial work, its salvation for the very souls of soldiers and the soldiers' legacy of it to civilians—men, women and children—has obsessed my mind.

Before the World War few of the most skilled and reputable surgeons specialized in facial operations. There were not enough seriously injured faces to fire the ambition of the best men. Many so-called "plastic surgeons" were quacks, or at best self-advertisers who claimed no more than to make fading women bloom again.

There was, of course, nothing contemptible in such work, if done by the right men; but those who did it were laughed at or sneered at by the rest of the profession. It needed the Great War, and the poignant knowledge that a spoilt face meant the spoiling of a young man's life, to lift plastic surgery to its present height of splendor.

Occasionally, before the war, surgeons specializing more or less in facial work would rebuild a deformed nose or a broken jaw; but during the years between 1914 and 1919 they learned, or rather, taught themselves, how to insert living flesh in place of that which had been torn away, making the new flesh an actual part of the body, through which the blood could circulate naturally and freely. Skin grafting and bone grafting were parts of the same amazing achievement—grafting to an extent never dreamed of before.

The Miracles Performed by Major Gillies

THE first engagement in 1914 brought to the field hospitals of France and Belgium men with such facial wounds as sickened the hearts of surgeons. They were more than wounds. In many cases they were an obliteration of the face, and it was then that surgeons on the spot began exercising their will power to increase such skill as experience and study had already given. The need they felt was like that a sculptor might have if ordered instantly to transform a neat statuette into the vast bulk of a Rodin giant.

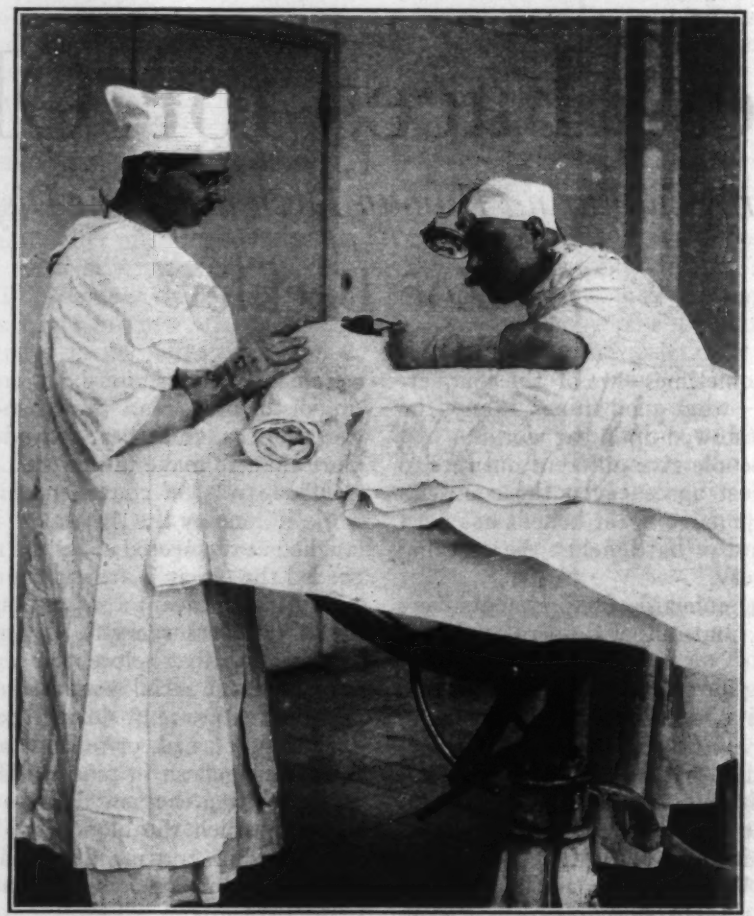
Many splendid men were there, ready to throw themselves into the struggle for success; and among these was an outstanding figure: Major H. D. Gillies, a young British surgeon, now C. B. E. as well as F. R. C. S.

I first heard of Major Gillies and his miracles from a famous surgeon in the north of England. I heard so much from this friend and loyal admirer of his that I asked for a letter of introduction, hoping for a talk with Major Gillies. The Surgeon of the North advised me, however, not to try to meet the great specialist if I wished to write about him. "He'll tell you nothing, and he'll forbid you to put a word about him into print," was the wise warning I had. My friend the surgeon,

however, lent me an autographed copy of Major Gillies' book, "Plastic Surgery of the Face," and took me to see a couple of the major's show patients, who sent me to others, and so on until I had seen a great many.

It was in this way, fascinated with the subject, that I carried on my investigations, Sherlock Holmes fashion, into the marvelous work of this man who is the foremost facial surgeon and specialist in skin grafting in England—perhaps in the world.

Like hundreds of other surgeons, Major Gillies went to France with no other idea than that of performing such operations as came in his way. At the time he took no more interest in soldiers' faces than in other parts of their wounded bodies. Soon, however, he became, as it were, haunted by the agonizing effect upon men, of terrible facial disfigurement. He heard men beg to die rather than live to be repulsive to those they loved—or might love some day. "Kill us!" they begged. "Don't leave us to live in hell!"



Dr. Julien Bourguet, noted French specialist in plastic surgery, whose work is largely in nose-repairing, remodeling an over-prominent nose

French surgeons, Major Gillies heard, were already achieving some success in this new and tragic field. He went to Paris to study their methods and form theories of his own. It was true, he found: the French were doing great things. But the sight of these great things gave him a vision of, and a longing for, greater ones as yet unattempted. Presently, after strong representations had been made, the British War Office moved in the right direction. Because of the fact that very specially trained surgeons were needed in a vast new sphere, Major Gillies was put in charge of certain wards in Cambridge Hospital, Aldershot, for treatment of war injuries to the faces and jaws of soldiers.

In this way modern plastic surgery came into being. Shrapnel and bombs produced appalling disfigurements. Often an entire face was blown off, leaving something that looked like a red sponge. But Major Gillies and others who had devoted their lives to the salvation of just such patients were not discouraged. They had learned how to make new faces.

The burns, too, were beyond description in horror. Airmen and sailors suffered the worst of these, and a few years earlier they would have had to become hermits. Their fellow men and women could not have looked upon what was left of their faces.

To give these unfortunate ones—many of them heroes who had earned every decoration for courage—places in the world they had helped to save—what a mission and what an ambition! So much was done at Aldershot that more had to be done somewhere else. A few wards in a hospital were not nearly enough for the sad procession ever arriving from the Front. A special hospital was opened at Sidcup, in the beautiful and historic county of Kent—loved by Rudyard Kipling—with Major Gillies as Chief Surgeon, and Lieutenant-Colonel J. R. Colvin as Commandant. The place is called Queen's Hospital, in honor of Queen Mary, who has taken a deep interest—as all women must—in this miraculous rebuilding of faces.

In this hospital, whose wards are in the lovely grounds of Frognal House, the Earl of Sidney's estate, some of the greatest surgical miracles of the world have been wrought. Thousands of wounded men have come in sorrow and gone in gladness, since the opening in August, 1917. But some hundreds of the most difficult and tedious cases still remain. Patience is the watchword with Major Gillies and his men! Bit by bit the wrecked faces are being restored through skin grafting and other processes slow, but in these days sure.

Many cases have been not only interesting, but epoch-making. Processes and mechanical details of a delicacy almost beyond belief have helped the workings of Nature so marvelously that the story of their development has been recorded by Major Gillies in his book.

Of this book there are 400 pages covering the history of the injuries, their examination and diagnosis, the early and later treatments, the planning and finally the successful carrying out of delicate facial repair; anæsthetics and the technique of operating. And not one of those pages has a dull line, even to the lay mind! There are scores of photographs, also, showing various stages of improvement from the original gaping wound up to the completely remodeled face, sometimes handsome, never repulsive as it was at the start.

There is scarcely a phase of plastic surgery as developed for the treatment of war wounds that cannot be applied as well to what Major Gillies calls "civil cases." Take cheek lacerations, for instance:

The Patience Required in This Work

"THE cheek," he says, "is an area which lends itself to good results. The lining is not usually a stumbling block as in lip and nose work. The supporting structure is generally found in a bone graft, and the skin covering is made good by flaps from the neck or forehead." You can understand from that last sentence how much *patience* must enter into the cures.

You look at a photograph of a young soldier, once

handsome, wounded by shell in two places, the cheek bone and the chin. You say, with a shiver of pity and involuntary repulsion: "Nothing can be done for that poor fellow."

But neither Major Gillies nor any other great plastic surgeon would take that view. *Already they see the face that they are going to create.*

At left, before the surgeon-sculptor's miracle had been performed. At right, attractive, youthful contour restored

The first thing before operating is to make the "supporting structure"—Nature's "facial scaffold"—and this must come from the body itself. Any form of foreign material is an irritant and gives trouble early or late.

"Metallic plates and filigrees," according to Major Gillies, "celluloid plates and injections of liquid celluloid, solid plates of wax, and injections of molten wax" have all been used and generally discarded. There is no royal road to the restoration of faces save by pure surgery. The replacement must be as nearly as possible in terms of the tissues lost—bone for bone, cartilage for cartilage, fat for fat, etc.

The Marvels of Plastic Surgery in Rebuilding Disfigured Faces

"CARTILAGE for large cosmetic purposes stands unrivaled. It is available in sufficient quantity, is easily fashioned to the desired shape and, what is most important, remains permanently in the shape and size in which it is embedded."

Your soldier—of the terrible photograph—with the two cheek wounds, therefore, gets a bone graft—from his own rib, perhaps; a couple of "rolled-in-fat-flaps" with tubed pedicles from arm or breast; then, finally, enough good skin from some eligible spot. And there he is with a new face, a *real* face, that the owner need not be ashamed to show anywhere!

He came into the hospital an apparent candidate for the scrap heap, his only wish to be out of a world which shuddered at him, and shut its eyes, a world empty of love or friendship. He goes out a perfectly restored young man, the slight scar left on cheek and chin adding a gallant touch which is attractive rather than repellent to those who haven't forgotten the Great War.

Repair of the eye, the nose, the jaw, throat and palate is more difficult, requiring even more skill on the part of the surgeon, more patience on the part of the "case." But it is far from being impossible, and success brings greater joy and credit, because of the difficulties to be surmounted.

Every feature, it seems, can now be refashioned by plastic surgery at its best. Lips can be made and given their right vermilion color, provided that the body of the patient is in fairly good condition, his blood decently pure. Missing eyelids are created—even if they have to cover a pair of glass eyes; muscular and nervous connection is given so that the new lids may lift and drop; nor are they unadorned with brows and lashes. These are provided from the hair of the patient's head, clippings from the scalp.

Major Gillies and other surgeons say that they are more than rewarded for years of study and work by the pathetic gratitude of the patients, their pride in their new features, and their eagerness to send photographs home. What a glory to turn war-wrecks into Men once more, to give them back the life and hope that seemed to have been lost forever!

In studying Major Gillies' amazing book, with its photographs and sketches, my imagination raced—now that war and its horrors are over—to the possibility of transferring these benefits to civil life. Though the shell and shrapnel wounds, the burns by liquid fire were worse than anything which civilians are apt to endure, still, accidents happen every day which make social pariahs of those who suffer them. Also there are cruel deformities of nose and mouth; harelip, cleft palate, abnormalities of the jaw or ears, and hideous birthmarks which ruin otherwise attractive faces. There are, too, the ravages of illness, grief, or age which often shut the door of a profession in the face of a man or woman, or end for either the happiness of love.

That these disfigurements need no longer be borne, is the wonderful legacy which soldiers who suffered have left to the world. The skill which surgeons might not have found time or inspiration to develop, had it not been for the soldiers' despair, is now at the service of all who need it. The procession of wounded heroes has passed on and the men who helped them triumph over their sorrow have leisure to give to civilians.

The best of the great plastic surgeons of war fame do not scorn to help those who suffer though they never fought. A final chapter of Major Gillies' book describes the application of plastic surgery to peace times—the making beautiful of those who were hideous, the restoration of youthful charm to the old, thus relieving depression of the soul, and producing a psychical change as beneficial as the change in a scarred, stained, or wrinkled face.

Major Gillies himself is still deeply occupied with his soldier cases at Sidcup and civil cases at other hospitals in and around London, to which he devotes several days each week; but in these days he finds time to undertake outside work for those who suffer, who are not soldiers; women and children as well as men; such as the remodeling of faces marred by deformity or accident, or the traces of passing years.

In fact, many of the photographs in his book might well be noted as examples of "beauty surgery," if I dared use such a frivolous phrase in connection with the serious work of this world-famous surgeon.

Remarkable Accomplishments of Plastic Surgeons of Other Countries

IN other countries, also, notably France and America, the Soldiers' Legacy to Civilians has already been bestowed upon many recipients.

Doctor Julien Bourguet, of Paris, formerly Chef de Clinique at Toulouse University, has now given to the service of civilians the rare knowledge of plastic surgery which he developed during the war. No scar of burning, no "port wine stain" so dark and terrible that he cannot erase it; no nose so malformed, no harelip so hideous that he cannot give it comeliness. In fact, since his time is no longer fully occupied with work for soldiers, Doctor

Bourguet specializes largely in nose-reshaping. He has rebuilt and repaired more of these useful organs for soldiers and others than any plastic surgeon in Continental Europe.

To concave noses he has given bridges; convex ones he has reduced to clear Grecian outlines; bent noses he has straightened; Cyrano noses he has redeemed from all possibility of ridicule; and vanished noses he has recreated in their old likeness from photographs—all without leaving a scar, for he works from inside with the most delicate of instruments. Parisians have a saying, nowadays, that "since we have finished with our little war, there are no longer any women in the 'high' world who are over thirty." The inference is that Doctor Bourguet has rejuvenated those thoughtless enough to pass that age before he undertook their cases. His actress wife, for instance, is rumored to be one of his most dazzling successes. Certainly she is dazzling! Many a wounded French soldier might think his sacrifice worth while, since it gave back to this woman, and to countless other women, their beauty through a war-surgeon's skill!

America's Record in Plastic Surgery

FORTUNATELY, America is not behind France or England in the blessing of plastic surgery, and this is well, for there are more accidents in America requiring such treatment than in any other great country. This is not because there is more carelessness in the United States, but because there are more factories and all sorts of dangerous occupations in proportion to the size of the land which maintains them. For flesh, bone, and skin grafting, England, perhaps, stands at the head in plastic surgery; but America is a close second: and in other branches of plastic work she is equal to any.

When I was in Paris, watching the wonders of Doctor Bourguet's clinic, I met a very distinguished plastic surgeon, Le Roy Stoddard, M.D., of New York, who had come from America to England and Paris to see some of Major Gillies' and Doctor Bourguet's operations. He is one of the men who began to specialize in facial surgery before the war. Indeed, his decision to become a plastic surgeon and his vow to be a successful one were arrived at in a dramatic way.

As a youth he had adopted the profession of law, although his heart was not entirely in it. One day a client came to him, a woman, whose looks had been utterly ruined by a jet of vitriol thrown into her face by a jealous rival. The young lawyer suffered at sight of her. "How much better if I could give back her beauty than win money damages!" he thought. And so completely did the idea of restoring wrecked beauty obsess him that he left the law to study medicine and surgery. Some success had come to him even before the war; but when that great catastrophe fell upon the world, Doctor Stoddard gave up all surgical work except for soldiers. Some of his operations were magnificent, especially those for the cure of hideous scars left by explosive wounds, puckering and discoloration.

The Marvelous Work of Doctor Stoddard

SINCE 1920, however, there are few disfigured American soldiers left; and Doctor Stoddard, in common with other surgeons of our country, is free for civilian work.

I saw three of his operations which he had been asked by a fellow surgeon to perform in Paris. One was for the flattening of a child's ears which were so prominent as to give a look of deformity to an otherwise charming head; one was for rejuvenating an elderly face that sagged into double chins and let wrinkles flow into the neck; and the third was perhaps the most interesting to watch—an operation for removing puffiness around the eyes.

For the eye case, Doctor Stoddard marked the zone of the operation just beneath the lower lashes with a blue pencil. The marks took the form of a crescent and gave to the surgeon the measure of skin which must come out. A few pricks with a hypodermic needle injected a local anæsthetic of cocaine; and the patient chatted with the operator not only while a sharp, razor-like instrument nipped out the superfluous half-moon of skin, but while stitches of black silk, like heavy eyelashes, sewed the painless, superficial wound. The same operation was repeated above the eyes; and already it was plain that fifteen years at least had been removed as by a fairy wand from the woman's face. The whole affair was over in less than an hour; and at the end of two days the patient would have the stitches removed, with no trace of a scar where they had been.

"There is no trick or mystery about this 'transformation scene,' as you call it," Doctor Stoddard said. "Any good surgeon can perform these operations; but he must have *constant* practice in facial work to gain the requisite skill. The fine technical points about the eye operation are two: knowing precisely how much cuticle to remove, and drawing the edges of the cut together with such meticulous exactitude that no dragging, thickening or overlapping can possibly occur, or any scar remain. In the hands of a competent surgeon there is no more need to fear a facial operation than a visit to a clever dentist. Nor can there be any danger of evil consequences to follow."

Not only was Doctor Stoddard's initiation into his profession attended with romance, but through it came the romance of his life.

The famous singer, Miss Alice Nielsen, had on one cheek a black mole which she disliked, although her adoring public admired it. In every rôle it was to her a bugbear. Hearing of Doctor Stoddard from enthusiastic friends, she consulted him about it. The surgeon studied the mole and promised to remove it without trace. He must have studied the rest of her face, also, for the next operation was the getting of a marriage license.

The Soldiers' Legacy to Civilians

NOT long ago a patient of Doctor Le Roy Stoddard was interviewed for a New York newspaper on the subject of an operation performed upon her eyes. When the interview appeared, the name of the surgeon was not mentioned; but so intense was the interest felt by readers in the subject—facial operations done by surgeons known to be competent and reliable, not "advertising quacks"—that the lady in question received more than a thousand letters begging her to give the name of the doctor. She was bombarded by telegrams, and her telephone was never still.

So pathetic were many of the cases described by the applicants—men with scarred or burned faces; mothers with children whose ears, noses or lips were deformed; young girls whose beauty was ruined by the stain of a frightful birthmark; middle-aged women who said their husbands were turning to younger and fairer faces—that the recipient of these appeals decided to answer each one.

Such is the splendid legacy that soldiers have given, through their martyrdom, to their brothers and sisters in civil life; a legacy obtainable in all countries whose specialized surgeons thrilled to that "divine desperation" in the first black years of war.

An Unusual Tale of Love and Adventure in a Southern Seaport

"What shall we do with the Cinderellas?" the sailor asked carelessly. "They might be put back among the prizes," suggested Durand, the gambler

White Slippers

By Charlton L. Edholm

Illustrations by L. F. Wilford

NOT being able to afford new boots, I was having my old ones fitted with sturdy half soles and new heels. That is how I happened to spend an hour in the stuffy workshop of the cobbler—a bent and twisted cobbler like a tough old juniper.

It was a shabby den in a decayed southern seaport, a port with a colorful past, but the workshop seemed to have been from the beginning of things a sordid and commonplace interior. Beside the cobbler's bench, a squat iron stove, round-bellied and rusty, sent out waves of sickly heat, although the sun was beating upon the whitened walls of the houses across the street.

On the counter before me were ranged the finished repair jobs: the slender, patent-leather shoes of a sleek cigar clerk; the brogans of a stevedore; the sport shoes of some pretty girl; the tiny sandals of a toddler; and the scuffed shoes of schoolboys, worn through in the most unexpected places.

While the cobbler tap-tap-tapped on my half soles, active as a woodpecker and as absorbed in his work, a friend of the old man wandered in and seated himself on the bench beside me with a long sigh of relief. The newcomer was a peddler with a heavy tray of collar buttons, packets of needles and papers of pins—a tray that hung from his shoulders by a broad strap and was swept by his patriarchal beard.

Over his arm was a stock in trade of shoe strings, a mass that was thick enough to form a cable for a liner. He must be an optimistic old peddler, I thought, to burden himself with hundreds of shoe laces. I wondered whether he lived in hope of encountering a regiment around the first corner, with every man jack in need of new strings for his shoes.

"How's business?" I asked him.

"Just middling," replied the watery-eyed old man. "I sold a collar button to a sailor, a paper of pins and two darning needles to a fat lady and three pairs of leather shoe strings to a rich Spaniard."

"Ah! And who was your wealthy patron?"

"Pedro Ruiz it was yesterday. *Don* Pedro, if you please, today! He had just won four hundred dollars in the lottery, so he was a rich hidalgo. Yet he deserved little of fortune, for he patiently waited until I had made up the change from a silver dollar, and he counted the coppers, one by one, as if he were still loading sacks of sugar for his daily crust. Bah! There is no soul in these people nowadays. They are lacking in fire, in generosity, in nobility! It was very different in the old days. Eh, Gaspar? It was very different when we were young fellows."

He raised his quavering voice to address his ancient friend, the cobbler, but Gaspar only grunted assent, as a twisted juniper might creak in the wind, and did not look up.

"He knows—he knows!" continued the patriarch, his blue eyes gleaming moistly. "He will not say much about it, but he remembers as well as I do the good old days when the streets of this port were paved with silver dollars. How they flung their money about, those sailors from everywhere! Gold from every mint in the world was in their pockets—but it did not stay there too long.

"The red-haired sailors from Ireland were the wildest spenders, but the Yankees had more money. The Swedes spent their wages when they were drunk, and the Englishmen spent theirs, drunk or sober. I remember well that gay English boy who gave a five-pound note to the monkey. Do you remember, Gaspar, the Italian with his hurdy-gurdy and his monkey, and how the little beast tore the bank note with his teeth in a rage? Do you remember, Gaspar?"

"*Si*," grunted the cobbler.

"Oh, *si! Si! Si!* You have nothing more to say than just '*Si*,' when I remind you of those happy days when sailors wore gold rings in their ears and carried golden doubloons in their pockets! You have patched tattered shoes with white silk and set diamond buckles upon them, yet all you can answer is to croak '*Si*'!" The peddler turned to me. "He is a dry stick, that Gaspar, yet he patched old shoes and set them with diamond buckles in his youth."

"Tell me about it," I replied. "I have visited many a cobbler in my time, but never have I seen old shoes brought to a cobbler to be fitted with diamond buckles."

"No, young sir, that happened before your time. Long, long before." He accepted with grave politeness the cigarette I offered and while we smoked, he talked. This is what he told me:

IT WAS in the *cantina* of Ramon Guitterez that I saw for the first time that mad Englishman. He was drinking with a seaman from Nova Scotia—a long, lean fellow, who never smiled, but put down the little glasses of brandy as if he were dropping letters into a box. And the spirits seemed to have no effect on him. He might as well have been a letter box. The English boy showed his liquor, though. A fine lad he was—brown-skinned, with dark, curling hair and hazel eyes. From too much brandy, his eyes were swimming and he laughed at his own jokes—which was more than his companion did—showing his splendid white teeth and the strong muscles of his throat as he threw his head back.

Hangers-on drew close to the pair of drinkers and the Englishman invited them all to drink, throwing a golden sovereign on the bar. A narrow-faced little Frenchman—a very skillful card player named Durand—edged closer at the sight of gold, and I saw his cold, gray eyes fixed on the stranger's ruddy face. A tall Venezuelan, whom I knew as a pickpocket and cutthroat, was also in the friendly group of drinkers. A woman joined them, a full-bosomed creature like ripe, tropical fruit, with eyes the color of topaz and hair like brass. She laid her hand on the Englishman's arm, saying something in Italian, but he shook her off roughly, as she pointed to the door of a room back of the bar. Her eyes flamed as he brushed her hand away, and the gambler explained, "You do not understand what the lady say."

"Don't I, just!" retorted the English sailor, with a loud laugh.

"She say there is a wheel of fortune in the other room. You know? Like a lottery. There are rich prizes you can win for a dollar: bracelets, earrings, combs of tortoise shell set with gold."

"WELL, what of it?" the sailor asked.

"She, the lady here — *Signorina* Teresa — wish you to play a number for her. For the luck. She wish you to win her the earrings of coral."

"Why does she want *my* luck?"

"It is easy to see that *monsieur* is a favorite of fortune," replied the gambler, bowing. "The lady wish to borrow a little of your luck."

"All right! Come along, then!" exclaimed the sailor, emptying his glass. "Let's win the coral earrings for the lady." He gave the woman his arm with much politeness and everybody moved into the back room, where a crowd was pressing about a great wheel devoted to chance. The wheel was standing on a greasy table with candles burning all around it. The room, with its low ceiling, was hot, stifling and a-buzz with many voices. Candlelight threw reddish glow and grotesque black shadows on the faces of sailors and the sweepings of the port. A little black boy with a red handkerchief tied over his eyes was whirling the big red arrow of the wheel.

Every time it stopped, there was a great craning of dirty necks to see who was the winner and what he had won. As we entered, a loud laugh that made the candle flames leap went up. A Portuguese fishmonger—a porpoise of a man with mere blobs of fat for cheeks—had won a powder box of ivory, with a huge puff like a giant thistledown. The fishmonger laughed, too. He was a winner, at any rate. If he had won something he did not want, so much the worse! But he was a winner!

The English sailor laughed more uproariously than the rest, flung down a silver dollar for a chance at the next whirl, and handed his number—33—to the siren who clung to his arm. The other gamblers selected their numbers and at a hoarse order from Ramon Guitterez, the negro boy spun the wheel. Like a reddish blur it flashed about the circle, slowed gradually and hesitated, then stopped at the winning number.

"Bravo!" shrieked the brazen-haired woman, as she saw that the arrow pointed to 33, and she waved her number triumphantly. "You have brought me luck, *caro mio!*" she exclaimed. "*Grazia.*"

But she laughed in shrill derision when the prize was fished out of the depths of the black chest on which Ramon sat. It was not the bracelet of gold, it was not the coveted earrings of coral; it was a pair of white-kid slippers of finest workmanship, but much the worse for wear. Amid the real treasures, there were comparatively worthless objects, and these slippers were perhaps the most worthless of the lot.

THE woman refused to accept the prize. She gave the slippers a contemptuous glance, and with a wave of her jeweled hand rejected them.

"Try once more, *signor!*" she coaxed.

"All right. Better luck next time!" The English sailor threw down another dollar.

"What shall we do with the Cinderellas?" he asked carelessly. His glance rested on the greedy face of the Portuguese fishmonger and he made as if to toss them to him across the table.

"If *monsieur* does not wish to keep the slippers, they might be put back among the prizes," suggested the silky voice of Durand, the gambler. "It is all for charity, this little game. It is for the benefit of a Spanish lady, Doña Pilar Ybarra. A very charming lady! But she is —what you call it?—down upon her luck. Her effects are being turned into cash to satisfy her creditors."

"Righto!" agreed the English sailor. "Here, Ramon, give these slippers another number and put them up again."

It was done, and by an odd mischance the sailor was once more the winner of the white-kid slippers.

"What's the game?" he demanded, half amused and half suspicious, while his frail companion shrieked with laughter. "Are you trying to put over something crooked on me?"

"But no, *monsieur*, assuredly not. It was just a chance. The numbers were different this time," said Durand.

"Try once more, *amico!*" urged his companion

"All right," assented the sailor. "It will help the young Spanish lady along. I don't care. Here, Ramon, chuck them into the chest."

Once more he flung a silver dollar on the table. Once more the chances were all sold, and the black boy, stolid under his red mask, spun the arrow. There was a minute of suspense, then a babel of surprise and amusement. That devil of an Englishman had again won. They were the lucky fellows, those Englishmen! And there were more grins and guffaws when the master of the *cantina* checked up the numbers once more and gravely handed the stranger his prize with a profound bow.

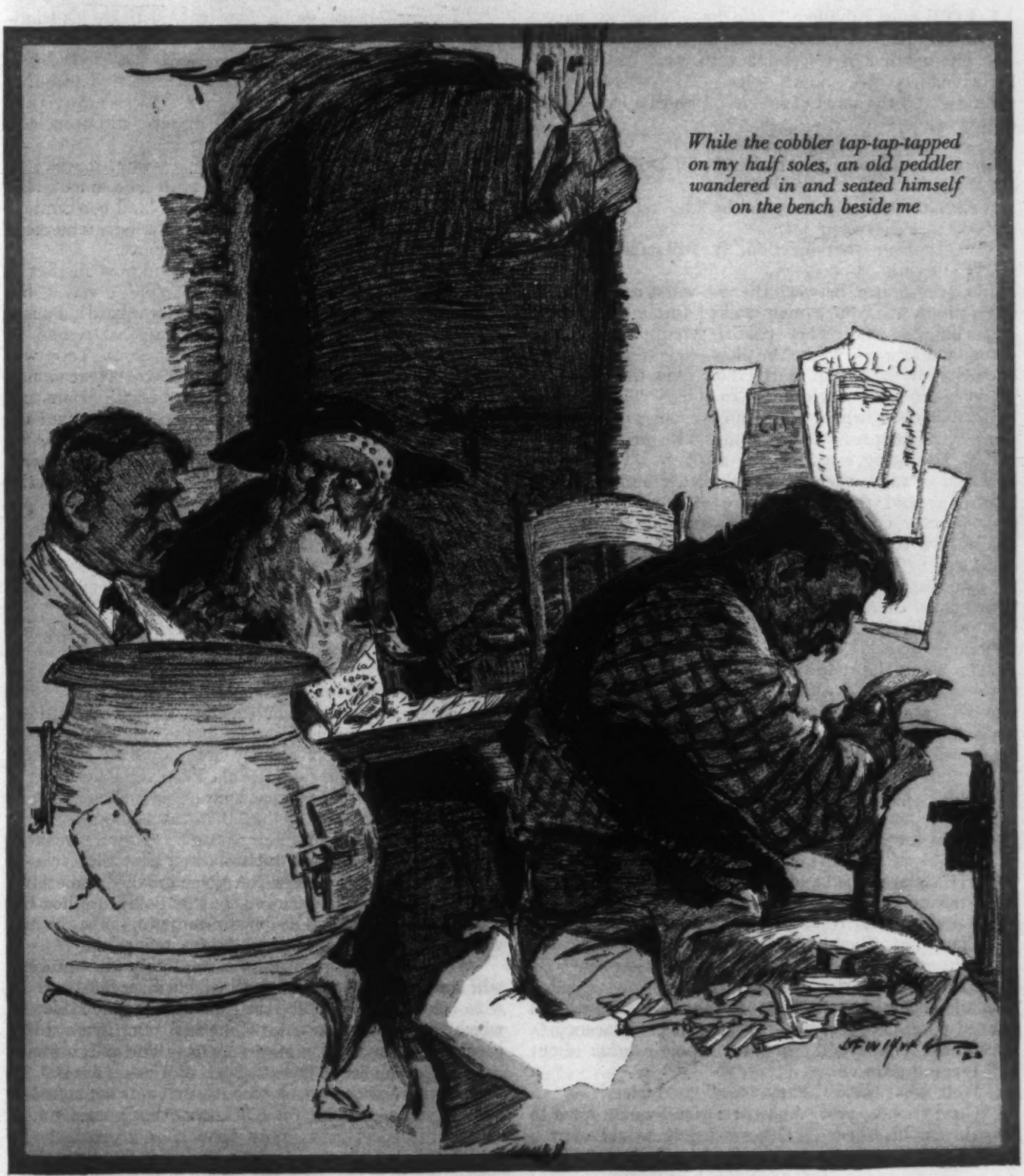
For the third time he had won the white-kid slippers!

Now, however, he was really angry, convinced that the whole proceeding was a put-up job. He wanted to fight somebody. His fists looked menacing. But the siren clung to his arm, laughing.

"It's no use, little gamecock! The blessed Saint Anthony wants you to have these slippers. He has his reasons, no doubt. So stuff them into your pocket. You are lucky—but not for me!" Her topaz eyes turned to the fishmonger. "Say, papa, will *you* win the coral earrings for me?"

She smiled with her full, red lips upon the delighted Portuguese. His eyes were lost in the fat of his cheeks as he smiled assent, for the minx was pretty beyond the ordinary. She ran to hang upon his thick arm, laughing over her shoulder at the Englishman.

"Take your winnings to Doña Pilar," she railed at him. "In return for her slippers, she will give you—who



While the cobbler tap-tap-tapped on my half soles, an old peddler wandered in and seated himself on the bench beside me

knows what!" She smiled again at his disgruntled look.

With that she dismissed the youth from her mind, in the business of selecting a number for which the Portuguese paid.

The sailor looked about for his companion, but the Nova Scotian was gone. The seaman had slipped off to some more congenial amusement. Thereupon, the Englishman began elbowing his way to the door, drawing black looks from many whom he jostled, but otherwise unchallenged. As he emerged into the narrow, moonlit street, barred with inky shadows, he perceived that two chance acquaintances were with him: Durand, the Frenchman, who understood cards so well, and the tall Venezuelan, who leered at him under eyebrows that met like a black band across his brow.

"HOW now, caballero!" said he. "Shall we have a nice little drink together in a quiet place I know?"

"The gentleman is coming with *me*," asserted the Frenchman, in his smooth voice. "He is weary of all the noise and the smell of rabble. I know a club. Very distinguished——"

"No!" said the Englishman decidedly. "I am going to put these slippers into the hands of Doña Pilar herself."

"*Bueno!* I will show you the way to her house," agreed the Venezuelan.

"I am going in that direction. We will stroll together," added Durand.

So, arm in arm, between the two worst rogues on the water front, the young man walked through the dirty, ill-smelling streets. They passed groups squatting in shadowy doorways, where the glow of cigarettes and the blurred mass of cotton shirts showed in the darkness. They heard the tinkle of mandolins. They passed barred windows where courtship was in progress: the suitor without, pressed against the wall; the adored one within the grating, a red flower in her hair. They passed lighted doorways, whence belched forth shouts and tuneless songs and the yellow glare of lamplight. They turned many corners, followed many alleys and came finally to a courtyard where the back door of a house stood ajar. The gaunt structure was built upon piers; the courtyard was paved with rough, splintered boards. Below them the splash of the tide could be heard upon piles, and the smell of harbor mud rose to them through the cracks.

The house they approached was an old mansion gone to decay, rising above the flat roofs of the squat sheds, warehouses and dives that composed the remainder of the quadrangle. And if they had stood at the front of the house, the Englishman might have recognized it as the very *cantina* he had left twenty minutes before!

"We are here," announced Durand. "At the head of the stairs, you will find the apartment of Doña Pilar. I will wait for you here."

THE sailor groped and stumbled up the dark, narrow stairway, and the Venezuelan made as if to follow him noiselessly, on tiptoe. But Durand restrained him.

"Stay, pig! Back! You will ruin everything."

"Why not? It is safe enough. The passage is dark. My little sweetheart is thirsty." He showed a quick flash of steel, that was instantly sheathed again, and grinned upon his colleague with fatuous complacency.

"Fool! You would bring the whole *cantina* about us," Durand growled.

"Well, what then? They are all good friends!"

"Good friends, yes! And each friend would have to be paid for his silence. Otherwise you would wear a tight cravat, my friend, before the month is out. How much of the Englishman's gold would be left for us? If your dear friends should hear him shout 'Murder! Help!' they would share it between them."

"Bah! They would never hear. I work fast." He jerked away and sidled toward the dark staircase.

"Wait!" pleaded the gambler. "There is a better way. Be patient. You shall have half, though by rights he is *my* bird."

"*Your* bird! But enough. What is your way?"

"Just a little harmless game. It will not hurt him. That is important, for you well know England has a long arm. Listen: first I will let him win. I will flatter his skill at cards. He will win more. We will double the stakes. At the right moment, luck will change. The cards will come my way. I will have all. Everything. Half of it is yours if you are still."

"I know a better game than that. I tickle his windpipe with my teaser. So! How can he shout with his windpipe split? It can't be done. I've seen it tried. Then I take *all*. I like that game better." The Venezuelan grinned.

The Frenchman almost wept at such stubborn lack of judgment.

"Oh, blind! It is your abominable avarice that blinds you, and will cost you dear. Hear me out!" He reached up to whisper in the ear of his tall companion. "What the Englishman has now is but a bagatelle compared to what he will bring here in a month."

"What do you mean? How do you know all that?"

"I HAVE heard him bragging—the drunkard! Boasting to his long friend, the sour man that resembles a pickled eel. Our bird is no common sailor. Today he carries five or six gold pieces in his pockets. Next month he will have a fortune. Gold in great bags. Handfuls to throw about. It is not a trading vessel—that schooner on which he sails tomorrow. It is on an expedition to recover treasure from a sunken wreck. I know not where, but he knows. What trading his captain does is a blind. It is the wreck of the *Golconda* they sail for. They know where to dive, and believe me, my friend, if we spare our little pigeon, he will carry back much gold to us. Let me win a few sovereigns from the boy. When he returns—rich—he will be ready to play again, for revenge. And I will give him his revenge. Yes."

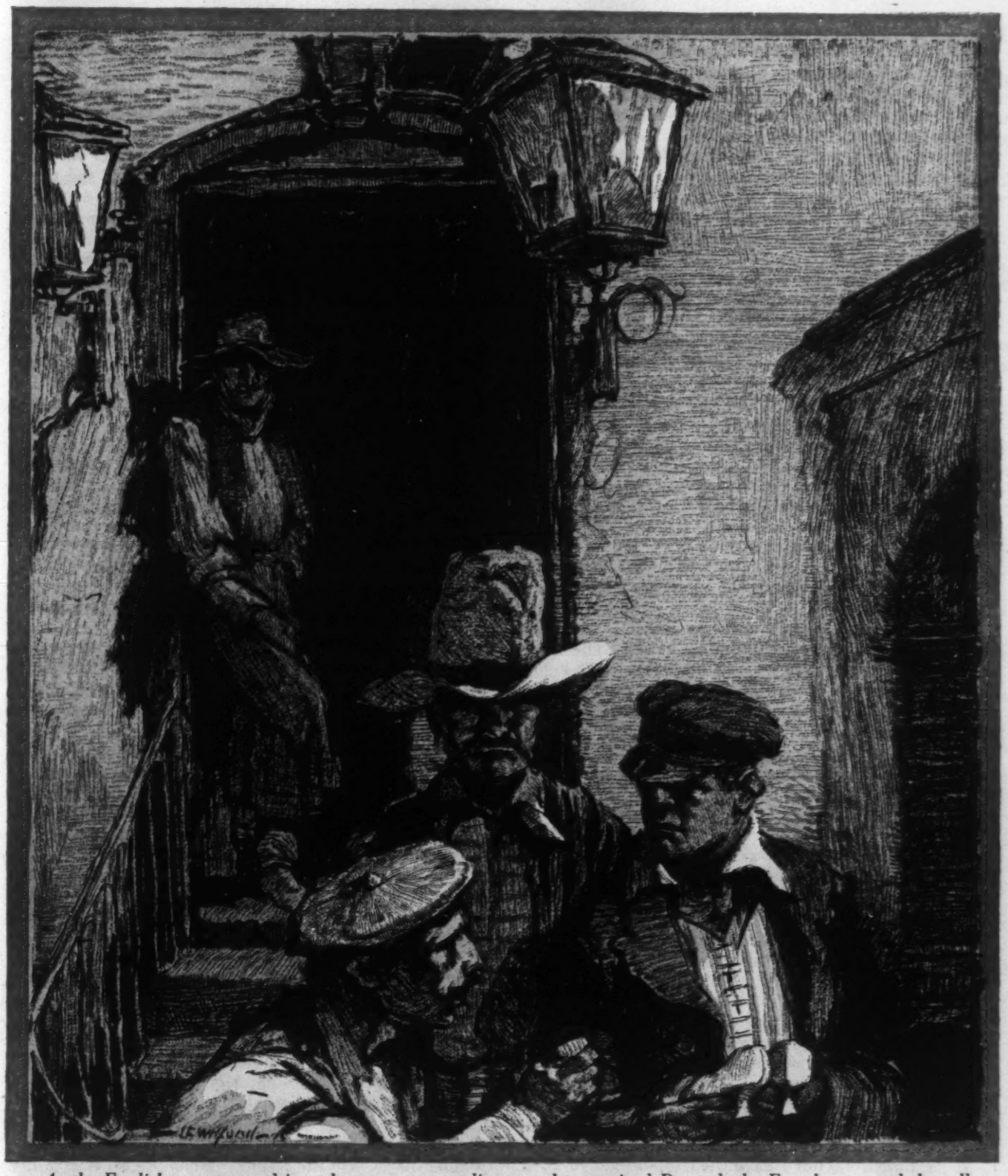
"And half of that is mine, too, if I let him go this time?" demanded the ruffian with the knife.

"But yes, certainly. Half is yours, my ancient. If only you deal tactfully with him now."

The pair whispered together a long time in the shadow, waiting for the stumbling tread of the English sailor on the dark steps. But already the boy had forgotten them utterly; he had found Doña Pilar and Alice.

It was at the moment that Durand first laid a restraining hand upon the cutthroat that the lad tapped at a door in the blackness of the passage. Only a streak of yellow light below the panels showed that there was a door in that stuffy cavern. A voice croaked something that he could not understand, but he boldly pushed his way in, expecting to find some brazen wench like the one who had coaxed him to gamble for earrings.

What he saw was a grim old lady, very fat, but very stiff and erect, in a high-backed chair upholstered in wine-colored velvet. She sat by a shabby gilt table, on which burned two candles. Like her room, Doña Pilar proclaimed the wreck of grandeur. The old woman, with her domineering face, a beak of a nose, flanked by two stern wrinkles, a strong mouth that was not softened by the gray mustache, the black eyes that stared under shaggy black eyebrows, must have been a personage in her day. As for the decrepit furniture and tattered



As the Englishman emerged into the narrow, moonlit street, he perceived Durand, the Frenchman, and the tall Venezuelan who leered at him under eyebrows that met like a black band across his brow

old hangings, they once might have adorned a palace.

"What do you want?" demanded Doña Pilar crisply. "This is no place for drunken sailors."

In spite of her hostility, the young man was not abashed. As for his intoxication, that had worn off in the long walk through the streets. He was almost sober —almost! A bit exalted, that was all.

"Doña Pilar," he said, with a deferential bow, "forgive the lateness of my visit. I came to restore your property to your gracious hands. I had the good fortune to win your slippers in Ramon's *cantina*, and the still better fortune to find it possible to return them to you tonight."

The old lady gave a hoarse chuckle as she glanced at the white-kid slippers.

"You are too kind!" she exclaimed. "And too flattering! Look!" She extended a foot from below the ragged skirt of brocaded silk, and showed a foot, broad, shapeless and flat, nested in a generous slipper of felt. "Once I might have worn such dainty things." She sighed regretfully. "But then you were in your cradle."

"But—but," the boy stammered, and blushed, "they *said* the slippers were yours."

"They were a gift from one of my girls. Many people were kind when they heard that I was forced to sell my

rings, my bracelets, even my toilet articles. Some gave this; some that. But Alice—poor girl—had no jewelry. Not even an extra gown. She sent me a pair of slippers with a kiss. She has a heart of gold, has Alice."

"Then will you give them to her?" asked the sailor, still proffering the white slippers.

"Give them to her yourself, my lad!" smiled the old lady genially. "Her room is in the attic, just above mine."

But there was no response to his tap on the door above, nor was there any glimmer of light.

"PERHAPS she has gone out," thought the youth. "Oh, well, I'll just leave them on her table. It will be a surprise for her when she comes in."

He pushed open the door, which was unlatched, and saw instantly that the girl was there. She was reclining in a window seat, leaning out over the ledge, with the moonlight streaming upon the mass of pale hair that hung over her slender shoulders. She looked around indifferently at the sound of the door gently striking the wall, and said carelessly, "Come in," to the shadowy figure on the threshold.

But the sailor remained where he was. Something familiar stirred in him as he saw the fragile form outlined under a dressing gown of cool blue silk. Her arm, bare above the elbow, was white and frail in that light, like a carving in ivory. Her profile, as she turned casually from gazing over the harbor, awakened recollections, too. Where had he seen such a brow as that, low and but slightly arched over a little straight nose? The curve of the lips—not too full, but a little scornful! The chin, small and delicate, but willful in its contour and its poise! Of what was he reminded by the cozy mansard room, so unusual in this part of the world? Not littered with prints, lithographs and the usual odds and ends of primitive decorative attempts. The chairs were straight and severe. The small bed in the shadow seemed virginal, so simple was the four-square outline against the pale gray wall.

"Well, come in. What are you waiting for?" The girl arose easily, without haste, and lighted a candle. Then she faced him as he stood in the doorway. "Why, you're English!" she exclaimed. "How jolly!"

The sailor took a short step toward her, then stopped. He extended the hand that held the tiny pair of slippers, and he saw her blue eyes narrow to a smile of pleasure.

"My slippers! What a nice boy you are, to bring me my slippers! You shall have a kiss for them. One for each! And you may put them on for me, too."

The girl dropped back upon the cushioned window seat, and extended a narrow foot, kicking off the mule of blue satin that balanced from her toes.

"THAT'S one good deed I was sorry for!" she exclaimed. "After I gave the old lady my slippers, I remembered that I had nothing left but these." She kicked off the other mule. "It never entered my head that a nice boy would trouble to bring them back to me."

The sailor advanced awkwardly another step or two, then halted.

"Well?" she challenged. "What now? Aren't you going to see if they fit me?"

She looked at him intently, the candle between them lighting his tanned face, his troubled hazel eyes, his lips compressed with boyish determination, his expression, almost stern, but more unhappy than stern. Finally she jumped up, laughing, and ran to him, laying a white hand on each shoulder.

"Oh," she said gaily, "you're shy!" She gazed at him with candid, almost childlike eyes, blue as cornflowers. "I like you that way. I like you better for being shy." And, bending over, she herself inserted her slender, silk-clad feet into the white slippers.

When she raised her eyes, he had retreated a step nearer the door. Still looking at the girl wistfully, he was about to leave her with a hasty good-by, but suddenly her manner changed. She was no longer the easy-mannered, audacious woman of the seaport: she was a lonesome child, far from her own people.

"Don't go away," she pleaded. "I'm blue. I want to talk to some one."

Gingerly he seated himself on the straight chair in the middle of the room, holding his cap in both hands with a nervous gesture.

"Oh, don't be afraid!" she said, with a touch of bitterness. "I'm not going to be sentimental. I'd just like a little human companionship for a while. Can't you pretend that I'm another fellow? Or pretend that I'm —a *nice* girl. A friend of your sister. Have you a sister?"

He nodded assent.

"Well, can't you pretend that I'm a girl of your sister's set? I might have been once. You never can tell."

"Of course I can imagine that," he answered. "When I saw you the first moment, it seemed to me that I was home. This little room, so restful; you, with your loose hair, your English profile, your voice when you spoke. It was like a bit of my own country."

"Then why were you going away in such a hurry?"

"I—I don't know." The boy hesitated to answer, though he knew well enough.

BUT his shyness was conquered. She talked about commonplace things; the seaport, the houses and shops, the people of the country, always with allusions to stir memories, comparisons of these things with similar things in England. Before long he was telling her all about himself. She could never have learned anything of all this by questions, yet what he told her was not very unusual; a common-enough story of a younger son, a ne'er-do-well, who had tried his fortune on the sea and had found little, as yet. But she was hungry to hear the sound of her own language and to listen to words that had no ulterior purpose; just a friendly chat with a fellow from home. It was good.

Then, without intending it, she dropped an occasional word that gave a hint of her own unhappy story, never guessing that those words were like sparks dropped upon tow. "Before Harry left me," she said once; and another time, "A year after I was married."

While he was careful not to question her, the sailor was aware soon enough of the tragedy of a rector's daughter, who had impetuously left home to marry the man she loved—an adventurer, a rolling stone. His neglect and desertion; her pride that had kept her plight from her parents in the country parsonage, so that in her letters she represented herself as carefree and happy. He caught a glimpse of all this in their talk about other things.

"Where is your husband now?" he asked suddenly, after a pause.

She started. "Why do you want to know?"

The lad replied, without emphasis, "Because I am going to kill him."

"Oh, no, you're not!" But she gave his hand a quick pressure of gratitude, and perhaps something more. She smiled at him sadly. "One life twisted out of shape! That is plenty for him. If I *knew*, I should not tell you where he is."

"I shall find him without your help," the boy affirmed with a cold rage that was more menacing than fury.

"A creature like that leaves a trail of slime. He is like a snail and can be traced. I will set you free." He stood erect, fists clenched, determination lining his features.

"OH, my dear! My knight-errant! Think well what you are saying. You would commit murder to pay off somebody's score! A somebody who is a stranger!"

"It would not be murder. It would be justice. And you—you are not a stranger."

"No? What am I, then?" Her voice was like some forest bird call, faint, clear, questioning.

"After I have killed him, I will tell you what you are to me." The boy stood proudly above her, with contracted brows.

But she took his two hands in her hands and drew him slowly down to the window seat beside her.

"That cannot be," she said in even tones. "He is dead. Harry is dead. He died in prison."

Then, somehow, without either of them being conscious of how it came about, he was on his knees, burying his face in her lap and weeping. She stroked his head, quietly, tenderly, yet with a certainty of hopelessness.

"Why do you weep?" she asked.

"Because that brute is dead. Now there is nothing I can do to show you how I care for you."

"Dear child!" She soothed him with wise, caressing fingers, as a mother comforts the one she loves. There was a long silence, then very softly she whispered, "You *have* killed him. The black shape of him that was eating my heart. *That's* gone, now."

They were silent again for a time, her slender fingers touching his hair. Then he sprang abruptly to his feet and looked down at her gravely.

"When I come back will you let me see you again?"

"Why, of course!" She looked at him with wide eyes. "You will be welcome here." She touched lightly the swelling curve over her heart. "Always welcome."

"AND if I am able to offer you something besides myself—if I can tell you that I have gained a fortune—Alice, will you——"

"A fortune?" She was startled.

"Yes. Oh, don't think I am raving. There is a fortune in sight for us. We are shareholders in the expedition. Every man in our crew will be wealthy, if this voyage succeeds. Then I will ask you to marry me."

"Poor, dear, foolish boy!" She smiled, as if she were

Somehow he was on his knees, burying his face in her lap, and weeping. She stroked his head, quietly, tenderly, yet with a certainty of hopelessness in her heart

humoring a child. "You have me in your arms. And yet you run away after a fortune so that you can marry me. No, I have never seen a man like you before."

"Answer me, Alice. Will you marry me then?"

"Dreamer!" She shrugged her slight shoulders, as she turned half away from him. "How can I say what I would do then? Tonight I love you. That is all I know. But tonight, this night of nights, you are running madly away for treasure to *buy* my love."

SHE turned from him and looked out over the harbor as she had sat when he pushed open the door. He stared at her with undecided eyes as he stood with his hand on the doorknob. He longed to stay, yet he felt bound in honor to go. She had suffered, yet for that very reason he could not hold her love cheap. And what had he to offer her? A boy's love. No more!

Abruptly she raised a warning hand toward him and looked below to the courtyard, straining her eyes at the shapes in the moonlight beside the door.

"Those assassins!" she murmured. "Durand and the Venezuelan. Do they know that you are here?"

"Yes. They brought me here. Are they waiting?"

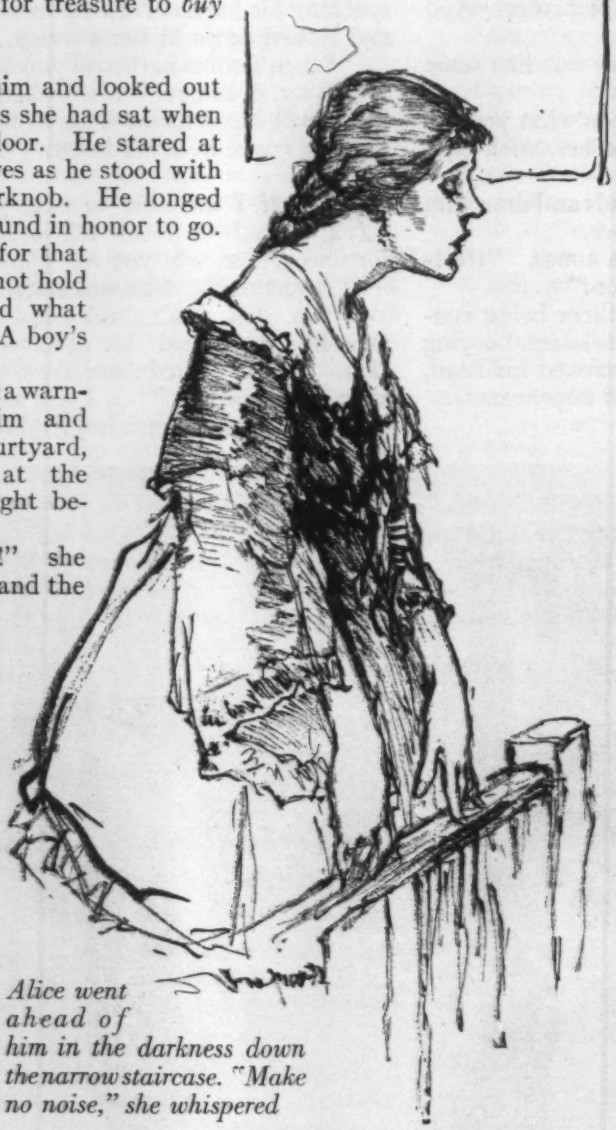
"Like cats at a mouse hole. Don't go down. You are in great danger. Those men are murderers."

"I can look after myself."

"One, against two armed men? I'll wager you have not even a pistol."

"What of it?"

"You are in greater peril than you know," she answered. "Those men would think nothing of murdering you for a few pieces of silver."



Alice went ahead of him in the darkness down the narrow staircase. "Make no noise," she whispered

Impulsively he thrust his hands into his pockets, and put their contents on the table, a small heap of gold and silver coins.

"Now I have nothing," he said. "They will have no reason to murder me."

"I will keep the money for you till you come back," she answered.

"No, that is for you. I want you to have it because—because——"

She guessed his meaning and smiled faintly. There was both irony and sadness in her smile.

"So be it," she said. "But, without that, you could depend upon me, forever. My perfect, gentle knight!"

"I must have something from you to carry with me!" he whispered. "Something I can touch and love and caress, because you have touched it. Give me your little white slippers. They brought us together. When I return, I will give them back to you, and you will give me something even more precious."

Silently she pulled off the tiny slippers and laid them in his hands. As he took them, he left a kiss in each soft, slender palm. Then he buttoned his jacket over the slippers and went to the door.

"I must go now," he said. "The schooner sails on the turn of the tide."

"Wait," she whispered. "I will see you safely away."

Alice went ahead of him in the darkness down the narrow staircase to the floor below, then led him along the corridor to a closed door. As she pushed it open, the smell of salt water and the harbor mud was suddenly in their nostrils.

"Follow me," she urged, and descended a stairway that wound about a narrow well in the interior of the house, ending at a small float anchored beneath the building. The water splashed against its sides and a skiff, hardly seen in the darkness, was swept against the float once in a while with a soft thud.

"This is Ramon's private entrance," she whispered. "It is convenient for landing contraband. See, beyond the pier, there is the moonlight on the water of the harbor. Make no noise. Go now, and God protect you."

Noiselessly the sailor found the oars and cast loose the rope.

"Let the boat drift after you have found your schooner," she whispered. "Ramon will think the skiff broke away. It will be picked up in the morning."

He hesitated before shoving off. The words "Will you come?" were in his heart, but he did not speak them. How could he, a sailor, take her aboard the little vessel setting out on a secret and precarious venture? She would be safer here. He would return in a month, rich, able to carry her away to some new land, where her unhappy past would never humiliate her, where they could make their home together.

"Good-by, my lover!" she murmured softly.

"Good-by. Good-by!"

His heart was burdened with premonitions of evil as he sent the skiff away with a strong shove of the oar. In a second or two her figure was but a pale blur in the darkness. Then, in a few minutes, he was in the open water beyond the ramshackle pier, pulling noiselessly for the middle of the harbor, where his schooner was anchored. Under his jacket, he could feel the pressure where her little slippers lay over his heart.

IT was more than a month before the boy returned to that squalid seaport. It was nearer two months, but in that time his dream of wealth had come true. The missing *Golconda*, lying amid a tangle of seaweed in shoal water, had been located and gutted of its gold, and the shareholders who made up the schooner's crew divided the wealth. Each man was master of a fortune.

When the English sailor walked into Gaspar's dusty little shop, his pockets were jingling with sovereigns and he tossed a handful on the counter. The cobbler—a

young man in those days, but already dry and reticent—looked with astonishment at the gold, but said nothing, waiting for an explanation of this mad display of opulence.

"Take these little slippers and repair them," commanded the sailor.

Gaspard looked at the slippers critically.

"They need repair, milord," he said. "They could do with new heels, new soles, new lining and new uppers. When I get through, there will be little left of these slippers. Why not order a new pair, exactly like them, from this measure?"

"No!" thundered the Englishman. "Nothing must be destroyed. Add to what is there. Peg on new soles with golden nails. Put on patches of the finest soft kid. Repair the lining with the costliest white silk, but take nothing away. And when you are through, set them off with diamond buckles."

"Are you joking, milord?" gasped the cobbler.

"Is this a joke?" The sailor threw another handful of gold on the table so violently that the glittering disks rolled and danced all over the floor.

"It shall be done as you say," replied Gaspar humbly. "Tomorrow morning the slippers will be ready."

"Tomorrow! Why do you think I am paying you the price of your shop? In an hour they must be ready."

"In an hour. So be it." Gaspar almost bowed to the floor. "My helper and I will work like slaves under the lash to satisfy milord. My boy will run for the silk at once. But the buckles, milord! Does my shop look as if it contained a stock of diamond shoe buckles?"

"I must have diamond buckles. Nothing less will do. These slippers are for a princess."

"Evidently. If milord would condescend to visit the jeweler, just a little farther down the street——"

SO while the cobbler was working furiously to earn his gold, the young sailor went from one jeweler to another, finding nothing that was good enough until he had combed the town. In an hour he returned. Beautiful indeed were the little white slippers then, with their new soles, their narrow, dainty heels straightened, their soft lining of white silk and their buckles, brilliant as tiny constellations. They were worthy of a fairy princess.

The sailor waited for nothing more. He would not eat, he would not drink until he had found his lady once more and set those slippers on her adorable feet.

Plunging into the courtyard, where the midday sun beat down upon the walls of shabby, disreputable houses and decayed sheds of the enclosure, he looked for her doorway. The place was more ghastly by day than by night, if possible, for the light showed pitilessly the dry-rot and stagnation, the walls with their color faded and scaling off in patches, the casks and carts in the corners all warped and idle, with rusted hoops and tires. The court seemed deserted, but as he neared the door, so well remembered from that wonderful night, the sailor saw that two figures leaned against the door posts. The black-browed Venezuelan and Durand, the Frenchman who understood cards, were whispering together. It gave the boy an odd sensation; it was as if they had stood there, immovable and threatening, ever since the night they had pointed the way up that dark staircase.

As he boldly pushed between them, they laughed in each other's eyes, as if sharing some sly secret. He did not return the gambler's ironical salutation, but stormed up the rickety stairs, two at a time. At the top of the stairs he halted abruptly, confronted by a figure in black that was merged in the darkness of the passage. Only the face showed white and ghostlike.

"Quiet!" she said. "The corpse is in that room." It was the Italian girl who had once coaxed for the coral earrings who spoke. Her eyes were red with weeping.

THE sailor reeled. He was forced to steady himself with one hand against the damp wall of the corridor.

"Dead!" he gasped.

She nodded. "*Sí!* The lady of the white slippers. She died last night."

"Last night! Dead——" Convulsively he clutched at his heart. He felt that he, too, was dying. So this was the end. It was for this he had swaggered through the streets with jingling pockets and high hopes.

"Where is the—— Where is she?"

She motioned to the door of Doña Pilar's room. It was slightly ajar and from within came the lights of tapers and the sound of women's voices, muffled and tremulous.

"Ah! She was a saint!" exclaimed the Italian girl. "The whole town loved her."

There was a low wail that cut the heart like a knife, as the boy pushed open the door. At the far end of the room that was still decked in tattered magnificence was a massive black coffin on trestles. It was completely covered with a black pall. Candles burned all about it in antique candleholders of silver. Women knelt before it in prayer. There was a sickening perfume of dying flowers, burning wax and incense, mingled with the indefinable odor of death in that terrible room.

Like a drunken man, the sailor staggered toward the catafalque, brushing aside kneeling figures, and threw himself over it with outstretched arms, as if he would embrace the dead. Ah, why had he left her that night when she lived and loved! Now it was too late. Forever too late. His arms strained against the casket. There was a murmur of horror at this act of sacrilege. The mourners [*Continued on page 123*]

He saw a grim old lady, very fat, but very stiff and erect, in a high-backed chair

Beak Leary Encounters Strange Happenings All Along

The Trail of the Tin Cow

By Ledyard M. Bailey

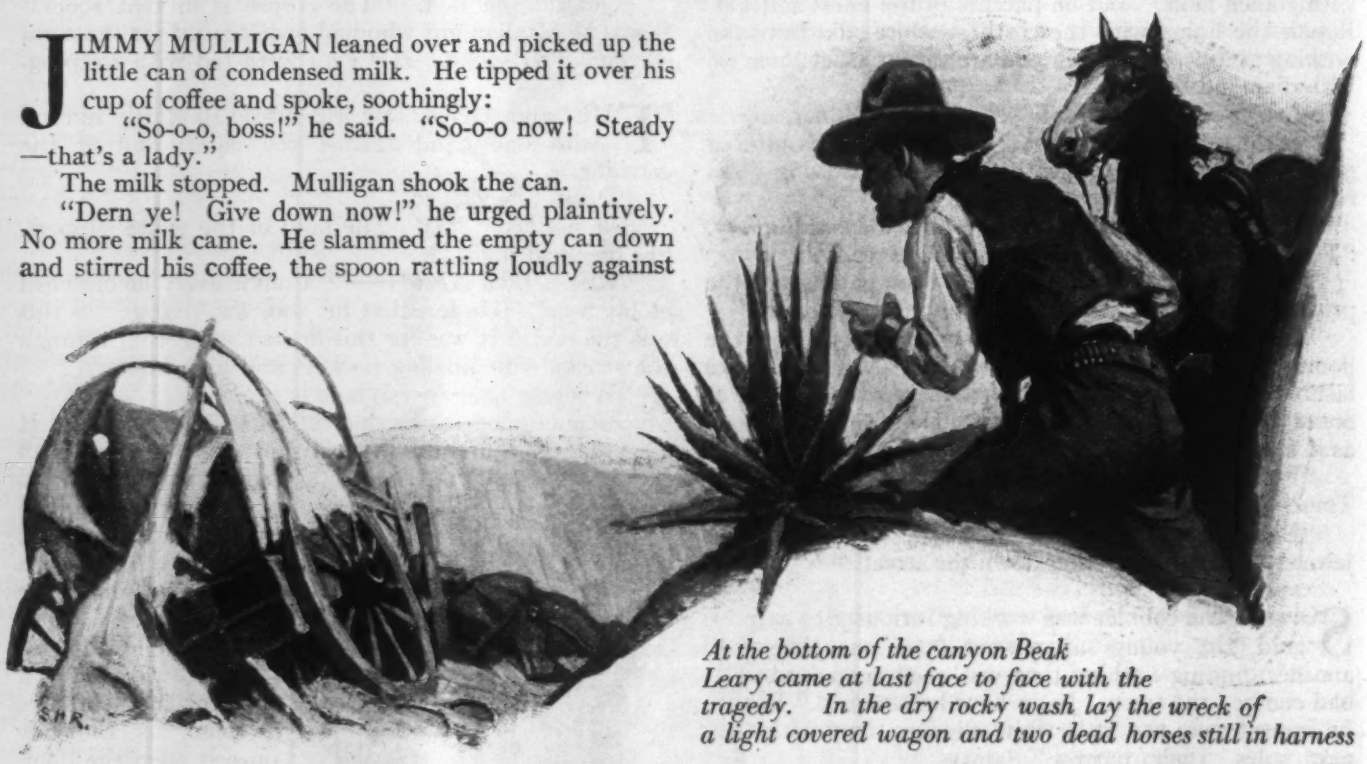
Illustrations by Sidney H. Riesenberg

JIMMY MULLIGAN leaned over and picked up the little can of condensed milk. He tipped it over his cup of coffee and spoke, soothingly:

"So-o-o, boss!" he said. "So-o-o now! Steady —that's a lady."

The milk stopped. Mulligan shook the can.

"Dern ye! Give down now!" he urged plaintively. No more milk came. He slammed the empty can down and stirred his coffee, the spoon rattling loudly against the tin. He wanted more milk, but not badly enough to get up and rustle another can now, with supper nearly over.



At the bottom of the canyon Beak Leary came at last face to face with the tragedy. In the dry rocky wash lay the wreck of a light covered wagon and two dead horses still in harness

While the spoon and cup sang together, Beak Leary leaned his back luxuriously against the big log, stretched his long legs, and fished up his papers and the little sack of Sheepherder's Delight. There was just time to roll one before Jimmy started to wash the dishes.

Beak sat there and looked the camp over with a contented eye, blowing gentle gusts of smoke through his nose. It was a good camp. They had set the small A tent under the pine—trimming off some of the lower limbs to make room. Facing it across a little patch of clean ground was the big log, sheltering the fire from the breeze that blew up the canyon, and making a fine rest for a lazy back. The creek ran along in its narrow channel a few feet away. It was only one jump wide up here, but very busy and talkative.

The water was hot in the kettle by this time, and Mulligan began to gather up the dishes. Beak Leary sighed and chucked his cigarette into the fire. Jimmy was so plumb restless about washing up. Why couldn't he wait a minute?

Nevertheless, Beak rinsed and wiped painstakingly as Jimmy washed, and he helped stow the food in the grub sack and sling it to a limb so the mountain rats couldn't reach it. He built up the fire while Jimmy piled up some small kindling for use in the morning.

The nights were cold already, and the fire in the shelter of the big log was mighty comfortable. Beak stretched out again with Jimmy beside him, and they smoked and looked at the fire and rested.

They had left Split X Ranch five days ago, after the fall round-up was out of the way, and come up into this country for a hunt. Beak had located the camp—he had noticed the good points of it the summer before when he had ridden up here looking for strays. There was a little meadow a hundred yards or so downstream, with good feed for the horses. The hunting was fair. The hindquarters of a young buck hung from a limb of the pine tree, with a gunny sack full of willow grouse and pine hens beside it.

MULLIGAN began to sing, dolefully, "The Wearin' of the Green." Beak Leary looked at him. He was Irish—"Bog Irish," he said on the rare occasions when he said anything at all about himself. Two years before he had signed on at the Split X as camp or round-up cook. He signed "James Milliken" in a clear, confident hand. The "Milliken" had lasted just long enough for Pinky Parker to find out that he was a good cook. Then it became "Mulligan," and had so remained. He was a good cook. When he had got the chuck-wagon organized to suit him, he could set out breakfast for eight men in just seventeen minutes by the tin alarm clock. At the home ranch, of course, he never went near the kitchen. There was a Chink for that.

Mulligan was old, as age ran in the cow country—say forty-odd. He was a good Catholic when there was a priest on the range, and he always had money with him.

He was never known to speak to a woman—or to speak of one. And, Bog Irish or not, he had lived by that most ancient code of the gentleman: "To ride, to shoot, and to speak the truth." Beak Leary liked him down to the ground, and dearly loved to aggravate him.

As he reached the end of his second verse, Beak broke in, quoting softly:

"Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness——"

Mulligan glared at him reproachfully. Then he looked into the fire again. After a moment's silence he spoke:

"A Persian ye say—this Omar Khayyam? First cousins to the Jews I always thought they were. But 'tis poetry he wrote. What is that now about the Finger?"

BEAK quoted it to him. Jimmy repeated the last line after him, nodding soberly:

"'Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.' True for him," he said, "though the Padres tell us different." He knocked out his pipe on his boot heel and got up. "Poor lad," he said to Beak. "You'll be havin' your fling with 'em while you're young—and 'tis only nature. But ye'll be better off when you're all through, like me." And he went to bed.

Next morning, while Mulligan got breakfast, Beak went down to the meadow and caught up the Fool Hen and Jimmy's buckskin. They planned to circle out that day and try to locate a bear whose traces they had run across now and then.

As they sat down to eat, Mulligan punched a fresh can of condensed milk. Beak Leary liked to watch him do this; he had a method all his own. Not for him the careless stab with the butcher knife or can opener. He carried a huge old clasp-knife with queer extra devices—a corkscrew, a gimlet, and a short heavy blade for prying stones out of a horse's hoof. The point of this blade was three-cornered, and Jimmy always used it on the milk cans, punching the two holes exactly opposite, close to the rim, and just the right size so they would seal up between meals and save the milk.

After breakfast they cleaned camp, stowed away everything, tied the tent flaps, and agreed on the country each was to cover in the course of the day's ride. Beak took the ridge to the east, and Jimmy rode downstream a short way and then crossed over into the next gulch to the west.

Just before sundown Beak Leary rode into camp again. He had found no fresh bear sign, and the only game he brought in was one fat cottontail rabbit that he had potted on a sunny rock slope. Mulligan liked to make rabbit stew with dumplings, and Beak liked to eat it.

Mulligan had not shown up. Beak unsaddled the Fool Hen, gave him a cold biscuit with sugar on it, and sent him down to the meadow with a hearty smack on the rump. The horse laid his ears back, snapped at him cheerfully, and trotted off to his supper. Beak started the fire, laid out the cooking outfit, cut a couple of venison steaks, and sat down to wait for Jimmy.

It was dead still, except for the busy little stream. The sun dropped behind the ridge, and in a moment the air was cold. He cut more wood and stacked it handy, just to be doing something. Then he sat down again, his back to the log, and waited. Nothing happened. Suddenly it was plumb dark.

He put more wood on the fire, so that it blazed high. He picked up his Winchester and climbed rapidly up the ridge to the west. Jimmy, he knew, ought to be in by this time. When he came out on the open ridge he raised his rifle and fired four shots—the agreed signal for "Where are you?"

He waited a few minutes, listening intently. It was dead still, hardly wind enough to rustle a quakin' asp. There was no answer. He tried again—one, two, three, four. No answer. He searched the country with his eyes, foot by foot, for a gleam of fire. Nothing.

It was not like Mulligan to be late, and he was the last man to get himself into trouble. But something had gone wrong with him this time, sure. There was nothing more to be done until it was light enough to trail him. The moon would be up soon, but that would not help much.

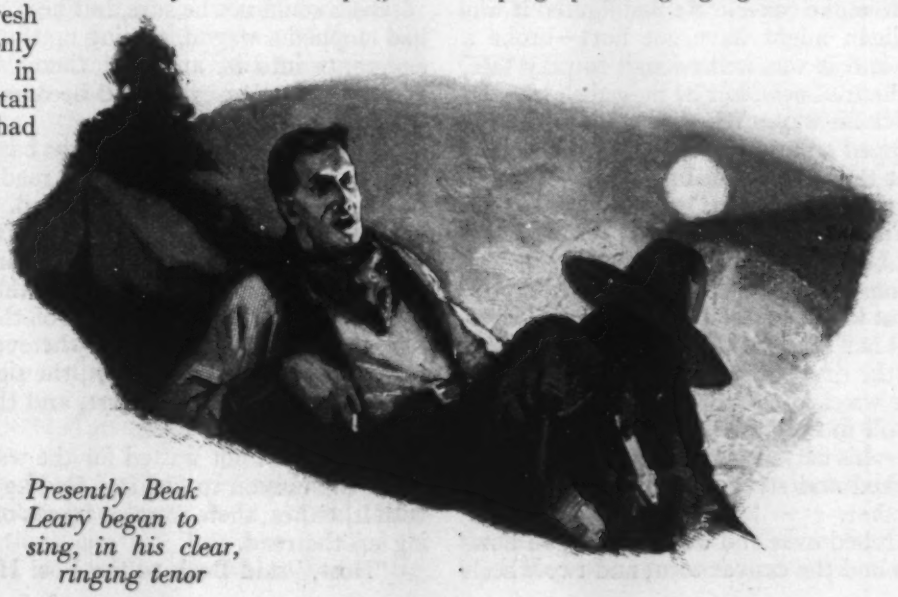
Beak Leary went slowly down to the camp and cooked and ate his supper, putting Jimmy's share in a skillet alongside the fire to keep warm for him. "That old longhorn," he said to himself, with affection, "he's too tough to break. He's bound to show up soon."

HE did not show up. Beak climbed up to the ridge once more and searched the country again for a signal fire. Nothing in sight. He fired four shots again, and listened. No answer.

He felt his way back to camp and went resolutely to bed. He could not do anything more until morning. Lying there in his blankets, he listened to the stream talking, sometimes one voice, sometimes two—speaking, answering—the inflections rising and falling. He could hear everything but the words themselves. After a while he slept.

In the first gray light he rode through the wet grass and brush on Mulligan's trail.

The trail ran plainly enough on the soft ground of the side hill and down across the gulch to the west, and went sloping up in long zigzags toward the bare ridge beyond. It was more broken as it twisted and turned through the brush on this upper slope, but he rode slowly and found enough signs in the little strips and patches of open ground to make sure of following its general direction. When he rode out at last on the top of the ridge, there was no more brush to bother him



Presently Beak Leary began to sing, in his clear, ringing tenor

and he could push his horse, for he was anxious now.

So far Mulligan had traveled the course they had agreed on, and there was no sign of trouble. The trail ran along this ridge, dipped down across the head of another gulch and climbed again to a higher ridge which ran back toward the east—toward that same bald peak that he had circled around the day before. From the top of this ridge the country fell away to the north and west, and flattened out to a valley leading to the railroad about forty miles away. Mulligan's trail led along this ridge toward the east, all just as it should be. Apparently, he had walked his horse most of the time, keeping a good lookout on both sides and across the gulch for that bear they wanted.

Beak Leary pushed his horse where the ground was good enough, but he did not make much better time than Mulligan had, probably. About eleven o'clock he pulled up and looked carefully at the trail and the other sign in the loose, gravelly soil of this ridge. He swung out of the saddle, dropped the reins to the ground, and walked carefully round the spot, studying the sign.

Mulligan had stopped here and rested, squatting on his heels and eating his sandwiches. There was a crumb or two of bread and a pinch of ash from his pipe on the ground yet, in spite of the wind that blew across the ridge. The buckskin had stood over by a low cedar, and pulled up a few mouthfuls of dried grass and weeds.

The ground fell away steeply beyond the ridge into a wide gulch that dropped into a canyon farther down. Along the far side of this canyon Beak could see a stretch of dugway road, which, he knew, crossed the divide farther south and led out north and west into the valley where the railroad ran.

The sign showed that Mulligan had suddenly jumped up, grinding his heels into the gravel, had run across to the buckskin, swung up, ridden straight over the edge of the ridge and gone plunging down the slope, the horse's feet cutting long gashes in the loose soil.

BEAK LEARY looked along his track to where it was lost in the thick scrub oak and maple brush. "Here's where the trouble started," he said to himself. "Now what could that wild Irishman have seen to start him off like that? He could not have seen a bear down there, not unless he was ten feet high. And he would have too much sense to tackle a bear in that thick side-hill brush, anyway. But something sure made him leave in a hurry."

He looked to his cinch and made sure that the tightly rolled pack behind his saddle was snugly tied. He had brought a blanket and some cooked grub and a couple of tin cups to make coffee. He had figured it was just possible Mulligan might have got hurt—broke a leg or something—and it was well enough to play safe. He rode down on the trail now, but he moved slowly and let the Fool Hen pick his way. When they came into the thick brush he dropped off and led the horse through the worst of it, so that the tough, stiff branches should not tear his pack to pieces. He was taking no chances. Something had certainly gone wrong with Jimmy.

Beak spent the best part of an hour working his way down into the bottom of the canyon beneath the dugway. And here he came at last face to face with the tragedy—or a part of it—that had brought Mulligan plunging down to the rescue. In the dry, rocky wash at the bottom of the canyon lay the wreck of a light, covered wagon and two dead horses, still in the harness. One had his head doubled under him—his neck had been broken in the fall. The other had kicked and struggled with a broken leg until he had been shot.

The outfit had rolled over and over, the wagon bows were crushed down and the canvas torn; and two wheels were smashed. There was a cheap trunk, broken wide open and the clothes scattered, and more of the household stuff was littered down the steep slope from the dugway. Some poor overland emigrant's hopes had gone to wreck.

Mulligan's trail led right down to the wagon. Beak could see where he had pulled the buckskin up a few feet away, and his boot tracks where he had walked up close—he had probably shot the struggling horse the first thing, to put him out of his misery. That would be like Jimmy. Then he had walked around the wagon and set his heels hard and pulled something out from under it—the patch of dry sand between rocks showed where he had dragged something heavy. He had lugged this back to the buckskin and lifted it into the saddle—the tracks showed how the horse had shied and sidled around restlessly while Jimmy heaved the load up and balanced it.

THE picture began to stand out clearly in Beak Leary's mind. Mulligan had been sitting up there on that bare ridge, smoking his pipe and looking down the gulch toward this canyon, when the team had come tearing along the dugway, plunged over the edge and gone rolling over and over out of sight. A runaway, of course. The horses might have been scared by a badger beside the road, or the brake might have slipped and let the wagon down on them suddenly—any one of a dozen things that happen on the road.

The driver had held on to his team and gone over with them. By the time Jimmy had reached him, he was either dead or senseless, smashed up by the fall or by that kicking horse. Jimmy had pulled him out from under the wagon, loaded him on the buckskin, and started up to the road with him—moving on an easy slant up the steep slope, walking beside the horse and steadying the load with one hand.

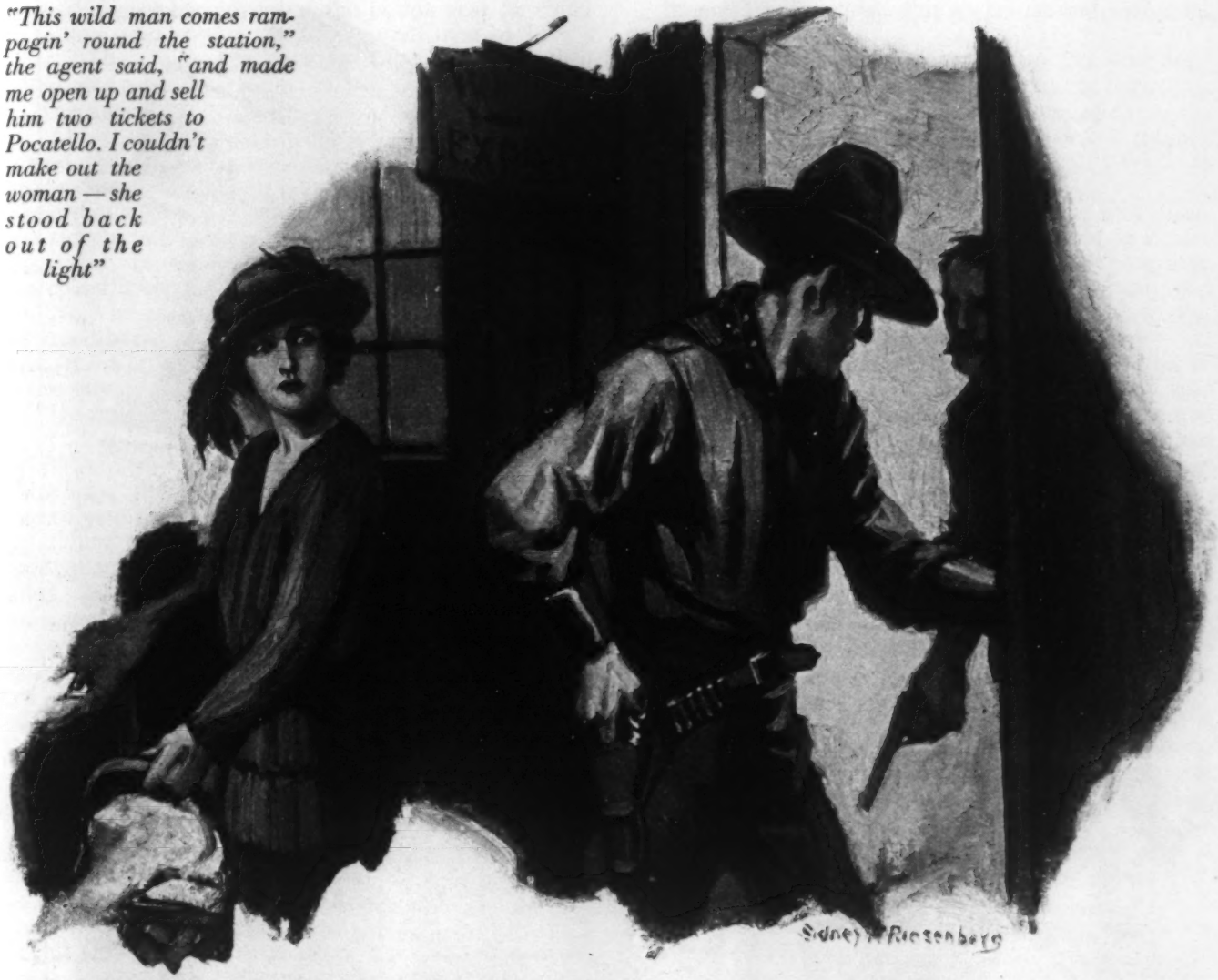
Beak Leary led the Fool Hen along this trail to the road, and then walked back on the road to the point where the wagon had gone over. The sign was mixed here and he could not read it clearly. It was plain enough farther on, where the runaway horses had come pounding and plunging down the road, and the edge was trampled and cut up where they had gone over. And it looked as if some one had jumped or fallen from the wagon. There was the mark of sliding heels, and a blur in the dust where a body had rolled, or crawled. But Jimmy's tracks and the buckskin's were cut up by other boot tracks. Two men had moved back and forth here, several times. A little way down the road, in a turn-out, were the tracks of another team and wagon, that had stopped, swung, turned round, and gone back again.

Beak could not be sure, but he concluded that Jimmy had stopped a wagon, coming up the canyon, loaded the emigrants into it, and sent them back to the nearest doctor. But then what had become of Jimmy himself?

BEAK LEARY walked slowly back to the Fool Hen, standing patiently in the road, anchored by the trailing reins pulled over his head. He led the horse down the road, studying the tracks of the team and wagon as it had come and gone, and looking for some sign of Jimmy. Almost at once he found the buckskin's tracks, close as he could get to the bank on the inside of the road, and moving at a lope. And wherever the tracks of the wagon or team had blurred it, the sign read plainly that the buckskin had passed first, and the team had passed later—both up and back.

Jimmy had not waited for the wagon, he had ridden down the canyon to find it. And he had not come back with it, either; there were no tracks of the buckskin coming up the road.

"Hoss," said Beak to the Fool Hen, "now where do



"This wild man comes rampagin' round the station," the agent said, "and made me open up and sell him two tickets to Pocatello. I couldn't make out the woman — she stood back out of the light"

you reckon that lunatic has gone? And in a hurry, too. He kept the buckskin at the lope."

Rubbing his nose, he stood still and considered. He took a long drink from his cloth-covered canteen and ate a sandwich. Then he swung into the saddle and set the Fool Hen to the lope on the buckskin's trail. Mulligan was either in trouble himself, or was trying to get some one else out of it. Either way, he was liable to need help.

The buckskin's trail was badly muddled, but about five miles from the wrecked wagon it swung sharply out of the road into a little patch of grass and birch brush, with a trickle of a spring. And right in the middle of the grass patch was an empty milk can. Beak Leary leaned his supple body from the saddle and swept the can into his hand. It had two little three-cornered holes, exactly opposite. He would know it in a thousand for one of Mulligan's tin cows.

HE sat his horse and stared at the little can, and his head whirled.

"Milk," he muttered. "What's he doing with milk? No fire here; he didn't cook anything. And he didn't even get off his horse—there is no sign of his boot heels. Hoss," he said gravely to the Fool Hen, "do you see any sense to this? Do you reckon he got worrying about his health, maybe, and decided all of a sudden to go on a milk diet?"

The Fool Hen shook his head sharply, and shifted his feet. Beak Leary rubbed his nose. As a general thing that helped him to think clearly. Just now it failed to produce anything he was willing to call an idea. He dropped off, scooped a hole at the spring so that the Fool Hen could drink, then swung back into the road and loped along, picking up the buckskin's tracks wherever he could.

Time passed. The tracks were blotted out now by a bunch of sheep, trailing out to their winter range. After two or three miles, they left the road and he picked up the buckskin's tracks again. The sun was getting low, and he figured it was about twenty-five miles farther to the town on the railroad. In half an hour more it would be too dark to follow a trail. The Fool Hen had dropped into his shuffling fox-trot now, but he kept it up tirelessly.

THE buckskin's tracks showed plainly once more as he turned off the road into a little sandy draw—and turned back again. There, glinting faintly on the sand in the bottom of the draw, was another of Mulligan's tin cows. Beak picked it up and looked it over. There was no doubt about it—no hand but Jimmy's had punched that can.

Beak Leary sat his horse and pulled at his nose and tried to think. It was no use. He took off his hat and struck the side of his head sharply with his hand. He jerked his head, and seemed to listen intently.

"Just as I feared," he sighed. "I've got milk on the brain. I can feel it swash."

At sunset he picked out a small patch of dry grass for the Fool Hen, and made camp—a dry camp. He saved most of the water in his canteen for the next day.

About one o'clock the next afternoon he rode into the town, and straight to the livery stable. As soon as the Fool Hen was watered and rubbed down and fed, he

Beak heard the girl say, "Simply splendid, Mr. Milliken! If I thought you wouldn't mind——" Here Mulligan shied violently

looked along the row of stalls. Down at the far end was the buckskin, all safe and sound, and pleased to see an old friend. But he had no information to offer about his master.

"Beak Leary sought the stable boss.

"How about that buckskin yonder?" he said.

"You tell me," said the stable boss, speaking with some heat. "All I know is a wild Irishman comes hellin' into town on him about two o'clock, night before last, wakes me up and tells me to take care of that horse like it was my rich aunt. Then he goes down and drags the station agent out of bed, makes him flag Number Three, and sell him tickets for Pocatello. Agent says there was a young woman with him. She was lookin' sort of wild and hurried—and the man himself acted like he was only two jumps ahead of the devil."

Beak Leary had given up the notion that he could make any sense of this thing. He went over to Tony's place, "The Quick & Dirty," for breakfast, and then drifted down to the station.

The agent could not add much to the story.

"This wild man comes rampagin' round the station," he said, "just before Number Three was due, and kicked on my door until my wife was scared stiff. I offered to take a shot at him, but he made me open up and sell him two tickets to Pocatello, and then hustle out and flag the train. In my night shirt and pants, too—and it was colder'n blazes!

"No," he added, "I couldn't make out the woman—she stood back out of the light. Acted sort of rattled, I thought. Carried a basket, or something, covered over. Is this guy a friend of yours?"

"He was," said Beak sadly, "until he went crazy."

"CRAZY is right—maybe," said the agent. "Anyway, you better look after him. The marshal comes down here yesterday morning and wires Pocatello about him. Says they want to talk to him about an accident up on the Dry Canyon dugway. Two people killed. Here comes Number Two," he broke off. "See you later."

Over on the western edge of the world Number Two's smoke plume showed, and two white jets of steam from her whistle. The rails hummed. A wiry man in boots and overalls, with a star glinting on his shirt, strolled down the platform.

As the train jarred to a stop and the water tower swung to the tender, a black porter dropped his step at the last Pullman, and Jimmy Mulligan climbed stiffly down. He turned and held out his hand to help a woman who was just behind him.

Beak Leary stood rooted. He simply goggled—there is no other word for it. The woman was young, easy to look at and very trim. She stood close to Jimmy Mulligan and looked up into his face, speaking to him earnestly, her eyes shining and her smile uncertain. Jimmy held his hat in both hands and looked carefully over her head.

Beak was close enough to catch a part of what she was saying.

"Simply splendid, Mr. Milliken! Proud—helped you. Finest thing—ever heard. If I thought you wouldn't mind——" Here Mulligan shied violently.

The girl laughed and flushed, snatched her bag from the porter, and whisked round the end of the car.

Beak started forward, but the marshal was before him. He touched Mulligan on the arm, and spoke briefly. Mulligan nodded and turned to go with him. As he did so, he saw Beak standing there—standing by, ready to help. His eyes lighted for an instant, then went blank again, and he moved his head just a quarter of an inch from side to side. The effect was exactly as if he had hung out a sign like they had on the door of the pump house: "Keep Out. This means You." He walked down the platform beside the marshal without another glance.

Beak Leary pinched himself viciously, he stamped on the boards of the platform, and he struck his fist against the varnished side of the Pullman. The pinch made him wince, the boards rang under his foot, and his knuckles were bruised. He was wide awake: this was a real railroad train, and that was Jimmy Mulligan walking calmly off to jail, after scattering milk cans all over the landscape, and running off with a woman in the middle of the night.

He followed his friend, in a sort of walking nightmare.

Beak and Mulligan were sitting side by side, their backs against the big log—home again.

Jimmy Mulligan looked at his friend and smiled his rare Irish smile.

"I can see the curiosity consumin' ye like slow fire," he said. "Listen then." And he began at the beginning.

Scarce a word had he spoken since, coming out of the coroner's inquest back there in the town, he had gripped Beak Leary's hand and said: "Good lad! We'll be movin' on now. This place chokes me."

They had ridden side by side in silence, that afternoon; and had eaten and slept side by side in silence when night fell; and so had come again to their own camp under the pine, an hour before sunset. Beak Leary had stood by his friend and held his tongue, and now he was to have his reward.

Jimmy told briefly what Beak already knew: how he had seen the runaway outfit plunge off the dugway, and had ridden down to help; had shot the hurt horse and dragged the dead man from under the wagon; and had climbed up to the road, the buckskin carrying the dead body. He went on from there.

"I had seen some one jump from the wagon as it went over, and I misdoubted it was a woman. When I came up to the place, there she lay across the road, her head leaning against the bank and her lips moving. When she saw me, she smiled—the craychure! 'I knew you would come,' she said: 'God has sent you.' She said that—to me," said Mulligan slowly, and looked at his friend. After a moment he went on:

"She made me kneel down beside her. 'He is—dead?' she whispered. I had to tell her yes. 'I—hoped so,' she said. 'It is better than being crippled. And it will not be long now, till we are together again.' Then she looked down at the bundle, lying across her body. It was a baby, a little baby, and its eyes were open—and it smiled. At me!" said Jimmy, and paused again.

"'LISTEN now,' the woman whispered, 'and listen carefully. There isn't much time. You must take her to my mother in Pocatello. This is the address.' She pulled a letter from her breast. 'She must have milk every two or three hours. There is canned milk in the sack.' She pointed to the sack lying in the road. 'I could not nurse her any more, traveling so much,' she said. And she told me how to mix the milk, and wash the bottle—made me say it all over after her—and her life going fast out of her, I could see. 'You will take her,' she said, 'to my mother—right away?' 'I will so,' I told her.

"She lay still then, and her eyes closed. 'God sent you,' she said. Then, 'We are Baptists,' she said. 'Are you a churchgoer?' 'I am Catholic, ma'am,' I told her. She opened her eyes at that. 'Catholic!' she whispered. 'But you are a good man—God sent you. You will not try to change her? Baptists we are—all my people.'

"Then she died, the poor creature—and left me all alone with that baby."

Jimmy paused, looking at the fire. Beak Leary sat still; he hardly breathed. Alone with a baby! Poor Jimmy! Small wonder he went crazy.

After a little he went on again.

"I laid the two of them side by side, close to the road, and covered them with a blanket I found caught in the brush, and weighted it down with stones; and I fastened a bit of paper to it—to tell any outfit that found them to bring the bodies to town. Then I took up the little baby and rode. It went to sleep—on my arm." He stopped and sighed, his eyes soft, his mouth wistful. "After a while it woke, and cried—and I fed it."

"Yes," said Beak. "I found the cans."

"Did ye so?" said Jimmy. "And did ye guess?"

Beak shook his head.

"About sundown I met two square-heads with a wagon," Mulligan continued, "and I sent them back for the bodies. They didn't want to go, at first. But after I was through persuadin' them, they went in a hurry!"

BEAK LEARY pictured to himself those two slow-witted Swedes—sullen at first, then driven by sudden panic to do the bidding of a madman on a buckskin horse, with a baby in one hand and a gun in the other.

"I rode into town along in the night," he went on, "and I roused up the Sisters at the hospital and made them detail a nurse for the baby; and I put the buckskin —good little horse—in the stable, and routed out that lazy omadhaun of a station agent, and persuaded him to stop the train for us." He paused again, a long pause.

"Did this nurse know her business?" asked Beak.

"I think she did," said Jimmy. "I scarce spoke to the woman."

"I noticed that," said Beak. The sarcasm was wasted. Jimmy went on again, unmoved.

"The grandmother seemed a decent body enough," he said. "She cried over the story I told her, and she cried over the baby—and she would have me stop a while at her house to rest. She was sure I must be half dead with the long journey, and starved beside. She was like to cry again when I would not stop. 'Tis strange creatures they are—all of them. A man has no chance wid them. But the baby smiled at me," he finished, "and held my finger." He sighed and fell silent.

Beak Leary watched him, smiling a little, deeply stirred, filled with pride in his friend.

The moon swung up over the eastern ridge. He turned his head to watch it.

"Jimmy," he said, softly, "why did you dodge when that girl tried to kiss you yesterday? That was no way to treat a lady. I was plumb ashamed of you."

Mulligan shot him a ferocious glance, got to his feet and stalked across to the tent, his very back eloquent of outraged feeling.

Presently Beak Leary began to sing, in his clear, ringing tenor, watching the moon swing above the ridge—

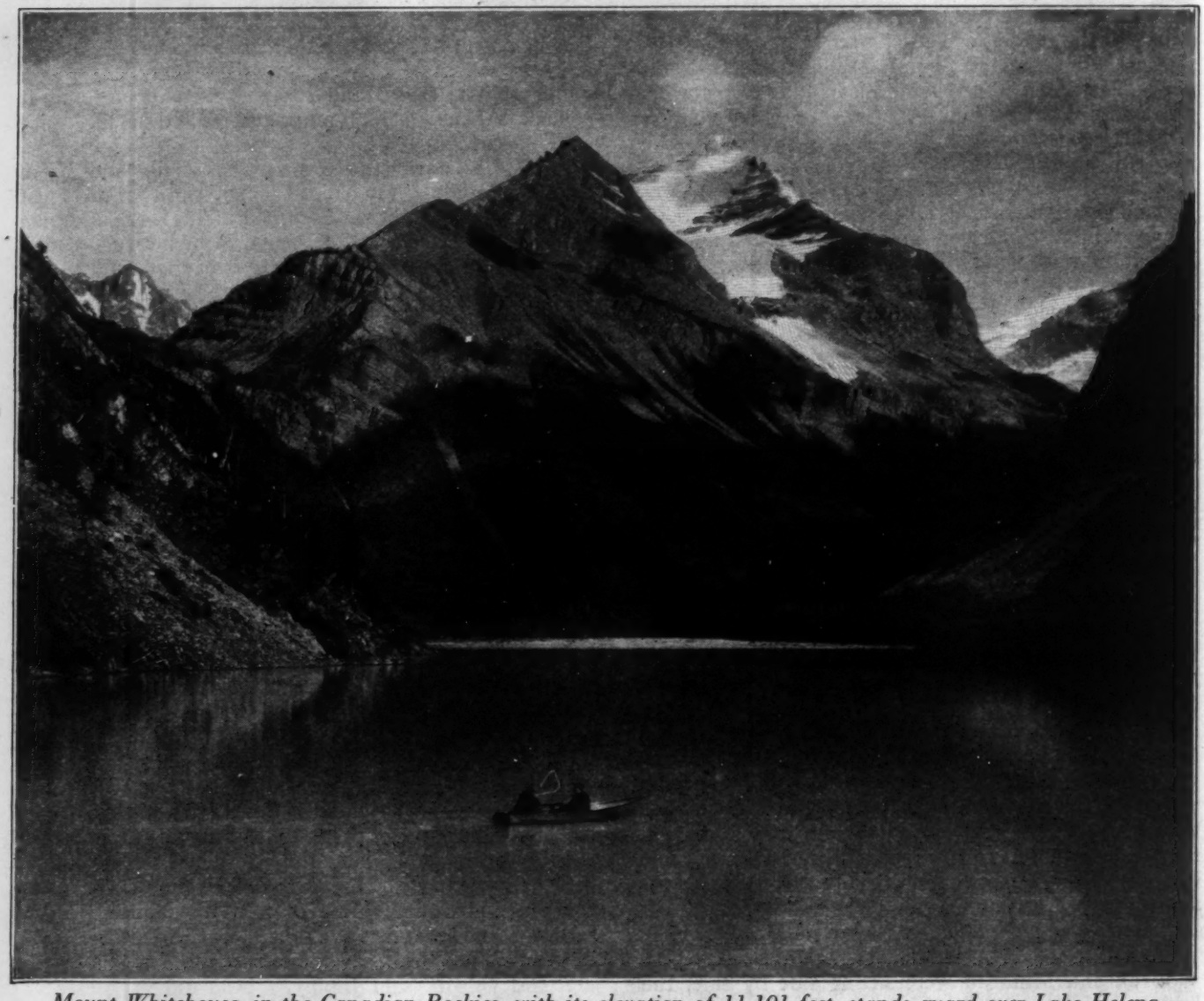
> "Ah, Moon of my Delight, who know'st no Wane,
> The Moon of Heav'n is rising once again.
> How oft hereafter, rising, shall she look
> Through this same Garden after me—in Vain!"

As the last note thrilled to silence, Mulligan stuck his head out of the tent.

"Ye limb of Satan!" he growled. "Only that ye have a mother—God pity the poor woman!—I would destroy ye where ye sit. Hush your caterwaulin' now, and leave me sleep."

A FEW minutes afterward, as Beak pulled off his boots in the tent, a smothered voice came from the other bed. Mulligan's wrongs still rankled in his memory.

"Baptist!" he muttered; "Baptist, indeed! And she for-rty miles from enough water to wet the sole of her foot!"



Mount Whitehouse, in the Canadian Rockies, with its elevation of 11,101 feet, stands guard over Lake Helena

"Wait a minute, I gotta think." Jupiter passed one hand confusedly over his eyes. "I'se dis lady's gya'dner, I is"

Confusion of Tongues

Comedy and Tragedy Play Hide-and-Seek in the Judge's Quiet Garden

By Phoebe H. Gilkyson

Illustrations by J. J. Gould

PEACE, like a languorous drug distilled of blossoms and sun-warmed grass, lay upon the old Peabody garden. No air stirred among the ancient trees that screened it from the country road, and the small pond in the south corner of its high, lichened walls reflected, without a ripple, a single puffy cloud overhead. Between interlacing elms an old house of pinkish stucco and white columns gleamed remotely, and from it a path of uneven flagged stones wound its random way pond-ward between tall hedges of boxwood, terminating between the pond and the south wall in the dappled shade of an arbor where climbing roses lay piled like whipped cream against their dark foliage.

Here, his crisp gray hair wreathed coquettishly in the drifting ivory petals, Judge Peabody reclined in a wicker chair. He held a telegram, twisting it absently in his short plump fingers, while behind his shell-rimmed *pince-nez* his brow was drawn in a thoughtful scowl. A catbird ventured a swift plunge in the border of the pond a few feet away, cocking a bright eye at him, but the judge did not stir except for the rhythmic rise and fall of his amply-curved waistcoat.

The stillness suddenly was broken by the click of footsteps upon the stone walk behind the hedge, and the catbird vanished. The judge looked up, starting and blinking, as a young man appeared; a very warm young man in golf clothes, with upstanding fair hair and a ruddy sunburnt face.

"Well, Kenneth!" exclaimed the judge, thrusting the yellow paper into his pocket. "This is a pleasant surprise! I had understood that you wouldn't be with us this week-end."

"I WON'T. That is, I think I'd better not. But I drove out from town to have a little talk with you, Uncle Pres, if you don't mind," replied the young man, shaking hands and glancing cautiously about.

"By all means. Have a seat!" The judge brushed a chaos of papers from a handmade hickory chair to the ground, but the young man dropped upon the slope of grass by the pool, hunching his shoulders moodily, and tossed pebbles at the pond lilies. He was about twenty-seven or eight, neither tall nor short, and one suspected that only unrelaxed activity held back a tendency to plumpness, but his broad shoulders and arms showed taut and hard beneath his tweed coat, and his face was

thin, finely chiseled, with a firm, sensitive mouth. His eyes, intensely blue, were so deep-set that almost no whites showed.

The judge crossed his white flannel-clad knees expectantly, but the little talk seemed slow in getting under way. After a pause he broke the silence himself.

"This grass needs cutting," he remarked, as one who offers a safe impersonal topic, "and those lilacs should have been pruned a month ago. If Swier doesn't send me a new gardener by tomorrow, I shall try a city agency. Of course McNab had to choose the spring to visit the Old Country. Do you advise me to have those maples trimmed higher? Or do you prefer shade to grass?"

NO reply. Another pause. Then the judge tried again. "I observe by the papers that your office is handling the Dinsmore case. Quite a responsibility for you, with your chief away. What are the prospects for acquittal?"

It seemed to dawn upon the young man that he was being addressed. He started, cleared his throat, and remarked, apropos of nothing:

"Everything I say irritates her. Everything!"

The judge took the mental somersault with agility; almost, in fact, as though prepared for it.

"It is regrettable," he commented, "that you and Nanny Lee cannot be more harmonious."

"Everything that I say—or do!" reiterated Kenneth. "Of course I'm not related to her, but you are my uncle as much as hers, and this has always been like a second home to me, and I don't propose to let a little snip from Georgia keep me away."

"You must certainly effect a truce of some sort," agreed the judge. "Nanny Lee will make her permanent home with me, since she is quite alone otherwise, and I should like your visits to continue in peace and pleasantness. But you are like a pair of tomcats, and you seem to get worse, instead of better. It is strange—strange! I thought you would be such friends."

"Heaven knows *I* try to be pleasant!" Kenneth told him hotly. "I fairly ooze sweetness and light. I grin till my face aches. But she misconstrues everything I say, and when she snaps at me I lose my temper."

"I know; you have a strange chemical effect upon each other; neither of you is like yourself. She behaves like a naughty child, and you—well, you're *too* pleasant to be convincing. It looks like sarcasm."

"Sarcasm? Who'd dare to be sarcastic with Nanny Lee? I'm scared to death of her."

THE judge sighed. "I never see her in that light at all," he said. "She seems spirited, of course, but very lovable to me."

"Well, of course, she *is* lovable," admitted Kenneth, rising and pacing the terrace in restrained ferocity. "She has that Southern charm, you know; everybody falls for her. There's something about her slow voice, and the way she laughs, and uses her hands—did you ever see such tiny hands? And dance—man, how she can dance! If she weren't attractive she couldn't get under my skin the way she does."

"And she's not just a butterfly, either," added the judge warmly. "I suppose she ran a bit wild after her mother died, but when she was called home from the school in Savannah by her father's illness she took hold of things and practically ran the plantation herself until his death, last year. Fine stock, those Southern women; salt of the earth——Think of that little thing riding alone over a thousand acres of flat Georgia cotton lands, directing black farm laborers. Kept it going, too, for three years. Of course, after my brother-in-law died I insisted upon her selling out, for I love the child and want her with me. I think she'll be happy here, but it's a good bit of a change—you can't expect her to fit in right away."

"But she does—you know she does. Everybody is crazy about her. It's only me she picks on."

The judge shook in silent mirth. Kenneth, his back turned, leaned moodily against a post of the arbor and shredded petals from the unoffending roses.

"Are you familiar," asked the judge, regaining his gravity, "with the legend of the Tower of Babel?"

"I suppose so; I used to go to Sunday School." Kenneth glanced at his uncle half suspiciously; the judge had his own subtle way of teasing and one had to watch out.

"So few of us speak the same language in this world," went on the old gentleman, after a contemplative pause, "that complete understanding—even a flash of it—is a rare and enviable thing. Overlooking differences of race or breeding, or circumstance, or even deliberate deceit, a word or phrase may vary to a dozen meanings with the mood of the moment—— In the law, as you doubtless have observed, the tragedy as well as the comedy of this fact is peculiarly apparent. Until we learn to convey literally the depth and implication of each thought, conversation will remain a dangerous pastime. But youth, Kenneth—youth is a race apart; its speech has universal range, and its understandings are largely superficial. You and Nanny Lee, for some obscure, possibly involuntary reason, have affected a pose with each other. You each are speaking an unfamiliar tongue and doing it badly; you have established no contact. Such situations are not uncommon and sometimes are incurable. But this one I refuse to take too seriously as yet—— You'll stay to tea, won't you?"

FOOTSTEPS tapped behind the hedge, and Kenneth hurriedly straightened his tie.

"Not unless Nanny Lee invites me," he murmured. "We had rather a scene last night after playing bridge at the Herefords' and I said I wouldn't come here until she asked me to."

A slim gypsy of a girl appeared under a low-reaching spray of the climbing rose; a sun-browned, keen little thing with the swinging, indolent stride of a boy, and very black alert eyes under low straight brows. Her dark hair was parted demurely and looped flat over her ears, emphasizing almost austerely the delicate curve of high cheek bones and the line of her pointed chin, but her dress was gay as a butterfly's wings; soft silk of nasturtium yellow, girdled in blue and copper beads, with a touch of the same blue bordering the wide sleeves. In one hand she carried a decanter and wine glass on a small tray.

"Telephone message fo' you, Uncle Pres, befo' I fo'get!" she told the judge, putting the tray carefully upon the wicker table. She had the drowsy-sweet voice of the South, and, although one sensed in her a latent dynamic quality, her speech and gestures were almost exasperatingly slow. "Let me see, now; Mr. Swier has a gardener fo' you and reckons he can send him out tonight or tomorrow mo'nin'. And here's a surprise—look!" She raised the decanter, which held a clear, reddish-brown liquid, about the color of household vinegar. "Scuppernong wine; real Georgia scuppernong!" she explained. "Mammy Juno sent me two bottles wrapped in those old candle-wick bedspreads, and they came through without a crack. Wasn't it sweet and innocent of her? And you a judge, too! Doesn't it smell delicious? Will you taste some right away?"

She paused in the act of pouring out the wine, mystified by her uncle's facial contortions. Catching her eye, he made a furtive gesture over his shoulder, and, turning,

she beheld Kenneth sulking behind a post. For an instant she flushed and hesitated, then put down the flask and held out her hand.

"KENNETH! I'm mighty glad to see you. You must be hatin' me today: I was right mean to you last night. Will you fo'give me and stay to tea?"

"Of course, Nanny Lee; there's nothing to forgive. It was all my fault," he told her, bowing very formally over her hand. A peculiar chilly stiffness had come into his bearing, and, although his gracious manner was impressive, his collar seemed to trouble him.

"No, indeedy, it was my fault," she denied warmly, and added, with a sweetly pleading note: "But you must admit I was right in bidding five spades on that hand? If trumps had been divided and you had given me just *one* ace, I could easily have made it!"

"Of course you could, I never doubted it!" He overdid his cordiality just a shade, and she eyed him for a moment.

"Well, you *looked* as if you doubted it, anyhow. And the other night I bid fo' diamonds on a *much* worse hand and made a little slam," she reminded him more sharply.

"So you did, Nanny Lee. Indeed it's all a matter of luck," he assured her magnanimously.

Suddenly she stamped her foot.

"You're laughing at me, Kenneth Crane!" she cried. "Why don't you say right out I'm a rotten bridge player?"

"That's absurd, Nanny Lee; I'm sure I never implied such a thing. You play very well indeed." In his desperate zeal to please her his manner became more and more unctuous and artificial, and it enraged Nanny Lee unendurably.

"I don't! I always overbid my hands, and you know it. Why don't you scold me, like a human being? You love to act patient and superior, and it makes me feel like a helpless goose."

"I'm very sorry, Nanny Lee, if I have conveyed such an impression," Kenneth began, with noble restraint. "I assure you——"

"You insist upon being a martyr! You just dote upon silent suffering! I like people to say what they think."

"Now, children, drop it, or I'll spank you both," commanded the judge. "Sit down, Nanny Lee. Sit down, Ken. Now, we will avoid all personalities until we get calmer. Was it warm in the city today, Ken?"

"No, sir. I mean—yes, sir. That is, it's always cool here, anyhow."

"No reflection upon our hospitality, I hope?" inquired Nanny Lee solicitously, a wicked gleam in her black eyes.

"No, you can be trusted to make it warm for anybody!" retorted the long-suffering Kenneth.

"That's a good-looking golf suit, Ken; new, isn't it?" put in the judge hastily. "Is that the Scotch tweed you spoke of?"

"But why do you persist in wearing red neckties, with your peculiar coloring?" inquired the irrepressible Nanny Lee. "And if you had gotten a blue-gray tweed, as I suggested, instead of that yellowish one, it would make you look—well, more slender, and not so pink-faced."

"I suppose," retorted Kenneth, his eyes like blue sparks, "that I really should take lessons in dress from those fellows I saw in Augusta—collars three sizes too big and blue-felt hats!"

Nanny Lee gave him a slow smile.

"There's one thing you *could* learn from the Gawgia men," she drawled.

"Now, see here!" The judge rose and slammed down his paper. "I will *not* tolerate this nonsense another minute. Nanny Lee, I am ashamed of you! How soon will tea be ready? It's warm down here; tell Norah to serve it on the veranda. Meanwhile Ken and I will sample your scuppernong, if you'll get us an extra glass. Put out some towels for Ken while you're up there and see if his room's all right; I want him to stay over night, if he will. But if you and he can't drop your bickering he can go home and you can go to bed, for I'll have no more of it here."

"All righty, Uncle Pres; I'll do that much fo' *you!*" She exchanged smoldering glances with Kenneth, and with her head held very high disappeared among the dappled shadows, flickering through the foliage like a golden butterfly.

The judge drew the crumpled telegram from his pocket, regarded it for a moment, then handed it to Kenneth.

"Speaking of misapprehensions, perhaps you'd better read that," he suggested.

Kenneth smoothed out the sheet and read: "Mex and Big Jupe shot guard and escaped this morning man on chain-gang says they are after us am sending two men to watch your place will catch niggers sure but advise reasonable precautions. Signed 'Turner.' Who the deuce is Turner?"

"You know him—district attorney," replied the judge. "Damned impertinence! When I want police on my place I'll send for them. Crazy Hottentot!"

"What's it all about?" Kenneth demanded, obviously thrilled. "Who the devil are Mex and Big Jupe?"

"MULATTO and negro that I sentenced to twenty years of hard labor last autumn. They swore they'd get even with Turner and me, and it seems they've escaped. Turner is rather new to his job, you see, and takes this very seriously. The big baby! I've had several such threats during my years on the bench—all hot air! I shall phone Turner at once to keep a dozen police for himself, but to spare me his attentions. Perfectly absurd! I won't have them hanging around here!"

"Hell's bells, Uncle Pres, are you crazy? Escaped convicts, and murderers at that! You ought to have a hundred cops around the house, rather than let Nanny Lee be subjected to the slightest risk! And yourself,

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too, of course — alone 'way out here in the country!"

"Kenneth, you and Turner see too many movies. Criminals are no treat to me; such fellows have no more fight in them than rats. If they had wit enough to break jail, they're too smart to waste time on old spites. You can wager they'll stop for nothing until they get out of the country. I shall go up at once and telephone headquarters. But it would be just as well not to let Nanny Lee roam about the garden alone today. Don't frighten her, you know. but—well, keep an eye on her until I come out."

KENNETH ran his fingers through his hair.

"Well, you're a regular fellow, Uncle Pres, but I think you're a bit optimistic about this. Go ahead and fire your bulls, if you like, but I'm going after that old six-shooter in your desk drawer, and I sha'n't leave this place until those boys are safe in jail again. I'm going to police this garden myself. No, I won't scare Nanny Lee. But I'm going to stick around."

"Well, be a Boy Scout if you like; you'll find it pretty tame business. I don't believe in unnecessary risk, of course, but the fellows probably have been caught by now. This telegram is six hours old; it was sent to my chambers in town first. I'll call up the State Penitentiary, and if they're still at large, I'll let the police patrol the place tonight—but it's all foolishness, of course."

"That's fair enough. Go ahead and phone. Meanwhile, I'll hunt up that old gun. Wish I had my Colt."

The two men moved toward the house, the judge puffing disgustedly, Kenneth rather pleasurably excited. As their footsteps died away silence lay again upon the garden, except for the ceaseless whisper of the little spring that fed the pond.

The shadow of the garden wall had widened, and spread the first blue coolness of evening upon the near-by shrubbery. Upon the rose arbor the hard white light softened to amber, and a wood robin called limpidly from the leafy fastness of an elm. There was a faint rustling of the vines along the wall, like the flight of a small animal of the woods, for no breeze stirred. Then, suddenly a face appeared above the vines.

It was not unlike that of a wary animal, with peering, uneasy eyes; apprehensive rather than predacious. It disappeared again for an instant, then soundlessly, deftly, a man leaped over the wall, and stood glancing rapidly about. His skin was the color of weak tea, and his face was smooth and hairless as a boy's; only the fine lines about his mouth and the corners of his eyes betrayed his years. His entire body seemed abnormally small; not dwarfed, but shrunken as though its tissues had been wasted by an acid. He wore overalls and a torn flannel shirt, with a plaid cap pulled over his eyes, and all his garments were powdered thickly with dust. He passed the back of his hand across his mouth and whistled softly. A second man leaped the wall, but more clumsily. This one was decidedly terrifying: a gigantic negro, with a wrinkled, heavy-featured face and hanging underlip, and great ape-like arms and shoulders that seemed to emerge, with no visible neck, from a dirty canvas hat.

"YOU sho' dis de right place?" demanded the big one thickly.

"Sure! Didn't that hick on the road tell us?" The yellow one's voice was thin and shrill. "Gosh, it's too easy! Miles from town, all alone with his niece and a coupla old servants. Look!" He pointed to the confusion of papers. "Musta been here a little while ago. We better hide here till it gets darker."

"Hide!" grumbled the negro. "Hide! I'm sick o' hidin'. I got cramps in every jint! Reckon we'll get clean away, sho' nuff, Mex?" he queried anxiously.

"Don't ask me that no more!" the yellow one ordered irritably. "Run, if you got cold feet! Ain't I managed this pretty good so far? Ain't I?"

"Mex, you sho' is got brains. I ain't got cold feet. I jist thinkin' now we got this fur, whut's the use to stop an' pot at this ole fellow? Me, I ruther git away an' lettum live than killum an' git lynched."

"You Southern niggers ain't got the guts of a rabbit!" Mex jeered, in his inadequate voice. "Doormats, that's what! Let the whites walk on you!"

The big negro blinked and distorted his loose features.

"Ho, does we?" he grunted.

"Bow down to 'em, go ahead!" Mex went on. "Let 'em rob you an' cheat you an' work you to death, and then throw you in stir to rot out yer life! Do you think this 'ere judge woulda handed us twenty years if we was white? No, sir! He says 'They're just niggers, lock 'em up,' he says."

Big Jupe growled incoherently, feeling in his hip pocket.

"We'll show 'em!" Mex told him in a shrill whisper. "They tried it once too often—— Got yer gat fixed?"

"She fix'!" Jupe rolled his bleary eyes. "Jedge Peabody gwine take a long nap dis day."

"Sst! Down!" breathed Mex. Jupe dropped soundlessly into the bushes and Mex glided behind the arbor.

Down the flagged walk came Kenneth, hands in pockets, something of a warlike swagger in his manner. He paused by the pond to light a cigarette, back turned to the arbor, and Mex, emerging silently, advanced cap in hand.

"Good afternoon, sir," he began humbly. "Pardon me, sir, but is this Judge Peabody's place?"

KENNETH wheeled about so abruptly that the mulatto shrank back in evident alarm. He looked so small and innocuous that Kenneth hesitated; he had a masculine hatred of melodrama and this seemed a mere boy.

"Well, what do you want?" he demanded gruffly.

"I have a little business with Judge Peabody, sir. Is he at home? I could wait if he's busy. I lost my way in this here yard, lookin' for the kitchen door."

Kenneth eyed him again. After all, there had been some talk of a new gardener, and Nanny Lee would be merciless if he created a false alarm, but he contrived to stand between the man and the path to the house.

"The judge is coming down here in a moment," he said, "but you'd better come up to the back entrance with me and the maid can give him your message."

An involuntary light gleamed beneath the man's lowered lids.

"Thanks, sir; I'll just wait here."

Kenneth, sensing a change in his manner, turned on him again.

"See here, what's your business with the judge?" he asked harshly.

Mex, not too conspicuously, moved to the far side of the hickory chair, resting his fingers on its back.

"Nothing much, sir; just a little personal matter."

He spoke a degree too smoothly, and Kenneth felt a strange chill at the pit of his stomach; a physical revulsion as from touching a snake. Roughly he seized the man's shoulder. Mex winced beneath his grip, and his fingers tightened on the back of the chair.

"You better come along with me!" Kenneth commanded.

"Jupe!" called Mex sharply. Involuntarily Kenneth turned, and saw Jupe rise like a dark shadow from the bushes not two yards away. He remembered afterward

"It's all a matter of luck," Kenneth assured the girl magnanimously. Nanny Lee stamped her foot. "You're laughing at me, Kenneth Crane!" she cried. "Why don't you say right out I'm a rotten bridge player?"

that two thoughts flashed through his mind, intermingling simultaneously; one, an unreasoning sense that this affair was theatrical and overdone; the other, an instant realization that there was no time to draw his gun. He must get that big fellow on the jaw with one blow; the little one would be easy.

He lunged quickly, but Mex was quicker; the chair swung through the air and crashed down on Kenneth's head. He had one clear glimpse of the inside of his own eye sockets rimmed in flame, then light and consciousness splintered into a thousand fragments. He fell like a log.

"Fo' Gawd, Mex," expostulated Jupe, "you gwine git dis hull state on our heels! What fo' you mix in wid dis feller?"

"WHO'S runnin' this game?" snarled Mex. "Don't you know one boy like this could put everything on the blink? Now there won't be nobody but faintin' women to put in the alarm." He turned Kenneth over. "He ain't dead. Can't use no gun now; we was lucky to crown him. We'll tie him good and hide him in the bushes." Pulling a cretonne cover from the back of a chair he tore it into strips. Deftly he tied a gag over Kenneth's mouth and bound his wrists and ankles, drawing the corded strips tight.

"Dis sure am a ticklish business," muttered Jupe, watching him without enthusiasm. Mex turned on him with a string of lurid epithets.

"There's the wall—climb over and run, you white-livered baboon!" he spat. "Beat it! See how you can make out without me! Go on, beat it!"

"I nev' said nothin', Mex!" whined Jupe, cringing. "Look, ain't I hankerin' fo' blood?"

"That's the stuff, Jupe," encouraged Mex. "You wild fellows from the South sure is devils with a gun. Ain't I seen you hit a squirrel at fifty yards? If I could shoot like that, wouldn't I do it myself? Now, just gimme a hand with this smarty and he kin take his nap quiet." They lifted Kenneth into the sheltered recess behind the lilac bushes.

"Soon be done now!" Mex proclaimed. "I'll climb along the wall where the trees is thick an' watch the house. When I see him comin' along I'll whistle. Then you come out an' git a bead on the walk. Pump him full, then jump for the wall and run for that old stone quarry. Got it all straight?"

Jupe rolled his bleary eyes. "I reckon so."

"We'll be over the state line in an hour and safe on a boat for South America tomorrow," Mex assured him. "Now, keep yer nerve."

Jupe dropped into the bushes and Mex slid cautiously along the wall toward the tree he had designated. He was scarcely beyond earshot when Jupe reappeared, dusting his arm violently.

"Git off me, bee!" he urged. "Git off! I ain't no rose!"

GAZING cautiously about, he stepped out upon the stone floor of the arbor, stretching and rubbing his stiff knees. He took a long breath, flexing his great muscles and muttering incoherently to himself. From his right hip he drew out a snub-nosed revolver and fingered it, turning it over in his palm with a dreadful, gleeful fascination. As he turned again to his hiding place his gaze fell upon the decanter on the wicker table, and with an avid grunt he pulled out the stopper. Raising it to his nose, he sniffed it inquisitively. For almost a minute he stood motionless, eyes dilated; so transfixed that he failed to hear light footsteps on the stone flagging.

"Scuppernong!" he murmured aloud, his loose mouth widening into a grin. "Scuppernong wine, befo' de Lawd!"

"Here!" commanded Nanny Lee briskly. "Put down that bottle!"

He started violently, rolling his eyes in angry terror, at a loss without the guiding mind of Mex.

"Mustn't meddle where you have no business," she told him, with kindly asperity. "You're the new gardener, aren't you? I'm right glad to see you're a colored man. This white trash won't let things grow with their everlastin' pruning and cutting. You go right up to the back do' and I'll tell the judge you're here."

Something in her calm authoritative manner took Jupe off his guard. He shuffled his big feet and peered about for Mex.

"Take off your cap. Don't fo'get your manners," she reminded him. "Now, what's your name?"

"Ne'mine ma name, lady," he mumbled sullenly.

"Open your mouth and speak plainly," directed Nanny Lee. "What did you say your name was?"

"Name Jupiter. Big Jupe dey calls me."

"Well, Jupiter," she remarked pleasantly, "you're no Yankee, I can see that. Where 'bouts you from?"

Jupe shuffled again, fingering his filthy cap.

"Ain' got no time to talk now, lady. Mus' hurry."

"Oh, that's all right," she assured him, "the judge is my uncle, and I have a lot of influence with him. From Virginia, are you?"

"No'm, not me. I'se f'um Gawgia, Jackson County, Gawgia. Yes, ma'am."

"From Jackson county!" echoed Nanny Lee delightedly. "Well, now, that's fine! I was bo'n and raised in Oglethorpe County myself. I've only been North a year."

"You don't say, lady!" cackled Jupe, who like all of his race was easily diverted. "F'um Gawgia, too? Dat's a fine state, yessum *ma'am*, ha, ha! Eighteen yeahs since I seen Gawgia, an' I bet I ain't seen scuppernong in all dat time. Ha, ha!"

NANNY LEE, pleased, poured out a glassful and handed it to him.

"Reckon you must have some, since you're from Georgia. You look tired. Tastes like old times, doesn't it, Jupiter?"

Jupe smacked his lips. "Sho' does, ma'am. Lawd, Lawd! Eighteen yeahs come September—— But dey's a powerful lot I ain't fo'got. Many's de time I pick scuppernongs in ole cunnel's vineyard—picks 'em one at a time; ain't no bunches like Yankee grapes. An' I kin smell dose ole wooden vats now, whah we press 'em, in de shed by de white folks' kitchen—— Nev' get no such good food in de No'th; no yams, no pone—an' peaches! Ain't taste a good peach since I lef' Gawgia."

Nanny Lee sighed. "This time o' year takes you back, doesn't it? The roses and all——Remember the scent of Cape Jessamine along the hedges? And don't the trees around here look pale and flimsy, after our live oaks and pines and magnolias? Seems like it belongs to another world. Even the people are different."

"Ain't it de trufe, lady! Nev' was no white folks like folks in Jefferson County, an' roun' heah even niggers talks queer. Seems like dese Yankees don' und'stand nothin'—ain't no good 'tall."

"Who were your white folks, Jupiter?"

"Go'dens. Yes, ma'am, ole Mis' Ramsey Go'den's fambly. Ma pappy belonged to ole Cunnel Ramsey, an' afteh he's killed in de wah ma pappy stay an' wuk for ole Mis' twel she died. Ma mammy, too—she cook fo'm. Mighty good cook, ma mammy."

"Gorden?" repeated Nanny Lee. "The Gordens who had a stock farm near Athens? Why, Colonel Ramsey Gorden was my father's dear friend. I remember him well; he died when I was about fifteen."

"MUSTA been young cunnel, yas'm. Ole cunnel's killed in de wah. Young cunnel daid, too, is he? He was a good boy, young cunnel, but he ain't got much gumption. Ev'body love his mothah de bes'—ole Mis' Go'den. Miss Julia, ev'body call huh. She was a gran' lady—yes, ma'am. Jes' a little thing, 'bout big as you, with hair white as fros', an' alluz had a white dress—nev' no culuh but white, aftah ole cunnel die. Ev'body love huh, an' skeered of huh, too. Sho' did have a sha'p tongue, ole Mis'! But she nev' fo'got huh cullud folks; watch aftah 'em, young an' ole, twel she die. Sho' did set a heap o' sto' by Miss Julia an' ole cunnel, my pappy did. Aftah Miss Julia die, ma pappy don' lib long. He was a white-folks' nigger, ma pappy. Nev' was no nigger's nigger. My mammy uster say trouble was he love his white folks better'n he love his Jesus—— But dey ain't no mo' white folks like in de ole days—no, ma'am."

"Well, Jupiter," Nanny Lee told him, "you had friends to be proud of, and I hope they're proud of you, up in Heaven where they surely are."

"Yas'm," mumbled Jupe, much confused. "Yas'm, hope so. Feah'd dey ain't, though."

"Well, I'm expectin' great things of you, Jupiter," she assured him, "so stand up straight and listen. You've let yo'self get mighty ragged and run down, and I want you to take this five-dollar bill up to the village and buy some clean shirts befo' my uncle sees you. Haven't you a coat?"

"No'm," he fidgeted, "ain't got no coat."

She came nearer. "See here, what's this?" Through the sleeve of his dirty torn sweater she pulled a fragment of the striped coat of a convict.

The big negro was overwhelmed with shame and fright.

"Nothin', ma'am. Just sumpin' I borrowed off a friend."

"Don't lie to me!" she returned sharply. "You've

"Round yo' neck, Jupiter!" the girl intoned. "Round yo' neck!" Involuntarily Jupe's hand went to his throat. "I see it—a big rope, tight round yo' neck. Tight, tighter!" Her voice rose

been in mischief, Jupiter. You've done something wrong."

"Fo' de Lawd, lady, I ain't!"

"You poor silly thing," Nanny Lee sighed, "why didn't you stay in Georgia? Southern negroes always get into trouble in the North."

"Seems like you mus' be right, lady, yas'm," he replied slowly.

"Now tell me what you've been up to," she commanded.

"I DUNNO, lady. Aftah Mis' Julia die, an' ma pappy die, I married a yalla gyal what had high notions. All time sayin', 'Come on, le's go No'th. Heap o' money in de No'th.' So we come. Dat was nigh fifteen yeahs ago. Den she mus' lib in de city. Me, I likes a fa'm. Nev' could git 'long in de city. Den Queenie, she run off wid a damn——"

"Jupiter!" interrupted Nanny Lee in a terrible voice.

"'Scuse *me*, ma'am, clean fo'got how to talk to a white lady—ha, ha! Yas'm she run off—— Aftah dat seems like I was alluz in trouble." He talked slowly, pulling at his torn sleeve. "In jail fo' one thing 'nothah. Nev' *could* git along right, somehow. Got to drinkin', an' got mixed up in some kinda queer business. Dunno rightly jes' *whut* it was all 'bout. White folks was aftah me. Aftah me all a' time. Couldn't git no rest. Jes' plain *layin'* fo' me." With the recital of his wrongs, agitation began to thicken his voice; his breath came quickly and his hands twitched. "'Twan't no use to 'splain nothin'; nobody couldn't und'stand. Ev'body hate me cause I was black. Dey's polite, polite an' smooth-tongued, but ev'body fool me, an' cheat me, and put me in jail. Whut chance a po' niggah got, I ast you? No mo'n a dawg; no, ma'am, no mo'n a houn' dawg." Moisture glistened on his ebony face; his eyes were feverish and fanatical.

A long whistle sounded from a far point in the garden, and Jupiter, starting violently, began to shake as though from a chill.

"My Gawd," he stammered, and tiny flecks of foam appeared in the corners of his mouth. "My Gawd, dis is wha' I gits even! Git out de way, lady! Git out de way!" Crouching, peering up the walk, his hand stole back to his hip.

"Whatever has come over you, Jupiter?" asked the amazed Nanny Lee.

"Jes' keep quiet, lady," he told her, his voice rattling in his throat. "Keep quiet an' don't git in ma way."

"Jupiter," she cried in sudden terror, "tell me at once what you have in your hand!"

Livid with passion, not looking at her, he drew forth the short black revolver.

"You crazy fool!" cried the girl. "Give me that gun, quick!"

"Ain' gwine huht you, lady, but don' git in ma way!" he growled again.

Resolutely she planted herself before him.

"I wa'n you, lady!" he croaked at her.

STANDING very still, she fixed her eyes in growing horror upon his throat, and, raising her hand, pointed at him so ominously that he paused, disconcerted.

"Round yo' neck, Jupiter!" she breathed, in low tense tones. "Round yo' neck!"

Involuntarily his hand went to his throat.

"A rope, Jupiter!" she intoned in a vibrant whisper. "A rope! I see it! A big rope, tight 'round yo' neck! Tight, tighter!" Her voice rose to a husky scream. "So tight you can't bear it! Tighter, till yo' eyes bulge out and yo' tongue swells big and black! You can't shake it off, Jupiter! It's got you! Chokin' you! Chokin' out yo' wicked life!" She stopped abruptly, still gazing at his throat.

"My Gawd!" he gasped.

"Send you down—down to hell! What's yo' father goin' to say? What'll your Mis' Julia say? Lookin' down from heaven, down, down—and seein' yo' po' black soul wriggle in the flames of hell! 'Tisn't Jupiter,' they'll say, 'Jupe was a good boy. Can't be our Jupiter.' And what'll you do? Wriggle—and sizzle—and burn! Everlastin'ly *burn!*"

"Oh, Lawdy, Lawdy!" moaned the negro.

"You big silly fool!" she went on, her voice lower, but more insistent. "You po' miserable idiot! Haven't got the sense you were bo'n with! 'Course you have bad luck when you let the devil in your heart! Don't tell me you didn't drink, an' steal, an' act plumb crazy. 'Course you get put in jail! Now stand up and be a man! Cast the devil out; cast him out quick and rough! And give me that gun."

Meekly he handed it over.

"Old Mis' Gorden was good to you, wasn't she?" she demanded. "Young colonel, too?"

"Yas'm—sho' was——"

"You've been blind and foolish," she told him gently, "but you've had a hard time, I know. You weren't used to Yankee ways, and you made a bad start. I know what it's like to be lonely and homesick, when everybody 'round you seems so cold and wise and self-sufficient. Makes you want to plague and pester them to see if they're human, doesn't it? You act meanest sometimes to the ones you like best. Then you hate yo'-self afterward because you want to make friends and don't know how. If it's been hard fo' me, I reckon it was worse fo' you, because I've had lots of kind folks to help me along. So I'm going to take you to my uncle, Jupiter, and make him give you a new start. Now, tell me——"

MEX leaped through the shrubbery, tense with rage. "Blast yer soul," he hissed, "whatcha waitin' for? There's a car with two bulls in it out by the gate, and the old fool has stopped by the porch to talk to a dago that just came in. Quick, up the walk, before it's too late! This jane can't stop you!"

"Humph!" said Nanny Lee, raising the revolver. "Can't she?"

Mex gave Jupe a hideous look.

"Double-cross me, will yer, you low-life——"

But his shrewd eye detected a wavering, a new uncertainty in the girl's manner, and with a spring he was upon her. She resisted him wirily, but his type was unfamiliar and terrible to her, and her self-possession was shattered. Implacably he forced her to her knees.

"Jupiter!" she gasped faintly, as the revolver dropped from her hand. "Help!"

With a growl Jupe shot out one huge hand, seized his pal by the back of the neck and hurled him, like a clawing cat, to the ground.

"Blast yo' yellow skin!" he roared. "Don' you know dat's a lady?"

Mex, rebounding like a steel spring, dived under Jupe's wide-spread legs toward the revolver gleaming in the grass. Jupe promptly dropped on top of him, and they rolled over and over, struggling frantically for the weapon. A sharp report rent the air and the two figures separated; Jupe sat huddled upon the ground with a foolish, surprised look upon his putty-like features; Mex leaped for the wall.

Shouts and running feet sounded from the direction of the house, and it seemed to Nanny Lee that the garden suddenly was alive with men. Bullets whistled overhead, and a pair of stalwart police crashed through

the shrubbery. The bullets went wild and Mex, with a ten-yard start, might have made the wall, but a staggering figure arose from the lilac bushes and collided with him, hurling him flat. As the figure turned Nanny Lee recognized Kenneth, a grotesque spectacle with a purple bruise over one eye and flowered cretonne wound about his face and shoulders. His coat sleeve was torn from the elbow and one hand hung at an odd stiff angle.

"Nanny Lee, are you hurt?" he demanded thickly, pulling the bandage from his mouth. "Are you all right?"

By this time one of the police had seized and handcuffed the prostrate Mex; the other was dragging Jupe to his feet. The judge, arriving at a ponderous lope, had lost his glasses and peered near-sightedly about, getting in every one's way. He seemed bewildered by the confusion.

"What's all this, what's all this?" he kept asking indignantly. Looking more closely, he recognized one after another of the group, and exclaimed, more in surprise than alarm, "Why, bless my soul, here are those foolish negroes. Mex, I gave you credit for better sense. Nanny Lee! Child, what are you doing here? Did these idiots frighten you? Where's Ken? Well, upon my word! Is this you, Kenneth, all dressed up like a Maypole? Was that you shooting a gun in my garden? Don't you know you might hit somebody?"

"NOW don't get excited, Uncle Pres," Nanny Lee said briskly. "Just send these men away and I'll tell you all about——"

Kenneth gripped her shoulder with his left hand.

"Nanny Lee, are you all right?" he persisted.

"Of course," she told him, "but where did you come from? How absurd you look!" Shaking off his hand, she turned to her uncle. "Don't you let them touch Jupiter, Uncle Pres; he's our new gardener. What's the matter, Jupiter? Not hurt, are you?"

"No'm, I'm all right," he assured her, rising unsteadily.

Judge Peabody smiled grimly.

"He's no gardener, child! Put the bracelets on him, Kelly, and get them out of here."

The taller of the two policemen, who had claret-colored hair and was peppered generously with freckles, produced the handcuffs, but Jupe flapped his big hands like a fretful child.

"Wait a minute," he urged, "I gotta think. Go 'way, officah, wait a minute." He passed one hand confusedly over his eyes. "Gya'dner. Yes, suh, I'se dis lady's gya'dner. F'um Gawgia, I is—yes, ma'am. Ole Mis' Julia's Jupiter, ain't I, lady? Rope ain' gwine ketch Jupe!" he giggled foolishly.

"Come now, no funny talk," commanded the officer, snapping the handcuffs into place.

"Nonsense!" cried Nanny Lee in a rage. "Make him take them off, Uncle Pres! Jupiter saved me from that dreadful man, and I'll be responsible fo' him."

"Don't be a goose, Nanny Lee!" the judge ordered. "Gardener, indeed! These are escaped convicts, child, and must be locked up at once. Did you have trouble with the fellows, Ken? Your coat is torn——"

"No, Uncle Pres, you don't understand!" Nanny Lee was half hysterical.

"She's right: you don't, for a fact," agreed Kenneth. "Do you realize Nanny Lee held up this big fellow alone by sheer nerve, and if it hadn't been for her you'd have a bullet in you this minute?"

"Nanny Lee—alone?" Color ebbed from the judge's round face, and rushed back in a purple tide. "Alone? And where were you, sir? You let this child come down here alone when you knew I was busy at the telephone? Good Heavens! My little girl, here alone!"

"They cracked me over the head," admitted Kenneth sheepishly, "and I drew a blank. When I woke up I was tied so tight I couldn't move or make a sound. I could hear Nanny Lee stringing this big fellow like Billy Sunday himself, and he was meek as a lamb. Then the yellow boy horned in and somehow I busted loose. There was some shooting and then the rest of you came along."

The two policemen were visibly impressed.

"I take off my hat to you, lady," the freckled one remarked to Nanny Lee. "You sure got nerve!"

"I'll say you have!" agreed the shorter one, who had a broken nose and a long scar on his chin. "This Jupe here, he's a bad one. He croaked a guard at the Pen last night."

"My brave little girl!" The judge was visibly shaken. "I deserve to be shot. I couldn't believe there was any danger — that these idiots, these——" Words failed him.

"We'll be movin' along now, yer honor." The red-haired policeman caught Jupiter by the shoulder.

"Uncle Pres!" blazed Nanny Lee, blocking their path. "Would you let this poor unfortunate man be put in jail after he saved my life?"

"You don't understand, Nanny Lee," the judge tried to calm her. "He's a criminal, a murderer. He——"

"LADY, tell 'em I ain't done nothin'," whined Jupiter. "Tell 'em I'se Go'den's Jupiter. Mus' be mistake. Ain't nev' done nothin'." He laughed shrilly and went into a fit of coughing, staggering against a post.

"He's hurt, I tell you!" cried Nanny Lee.

"Ain't huht none," the negro denied, with a kind of crazy dignity, "jes' tiahd. Awful tiahd. Been helpin' pappy gather scuppernongs. Been pickin' too long, pappy; fifteen years is too long. Mis' Julia, she scole us if we's late. Cyan't wait no longer, pappy! Mus' res'. Gotta sleep." He staggered again and caught the side of the table. An empty flask fell from his pocket and splintered upon the stone floor.

"Drunk!" announced Kenneth.

"We'll fix him," Officer Kelly assured them. "We got a car up at the gate. Come on here!"

Nanny Lee, troubled, but unconvinced, drew back reluctantly as the men took Jupe roughly by the arms. He tried meekly enough to move forward, but

The Night Bombers

ELSEWHERE in this issue appears the first of several remarkable stories by a British Army aviator. Major Vigors reveals a side of aerial fighting in the late war that has been hitherto shrouded in utter secrecy.

The romance of night bombing and extraordinary secret service activities carried on by the birdmen during the latter part of the war has never been told to the public before.

Major Vigors' articles therefore have even greater significance than their intrinsic fascination. They are the first published stories of actual exploits by the night flyers; and they are related by a pilot whose hair's-breadth escapes throughout the war had few parallels even among his fellows in the flying squadrons.

his steps were feeble and uncertain, and as they emerged from the arbor he stopped, so abruptly that the others relaxed their hold. A plumy spray of white roses hung almost to the ground from a corner of the arbor, and now in the first faint breeze of the evening it stirred faintly, scattering creamy petals. Jupe stared at it in pleased surprise.

"Well, I 'clare fo' goodness, Mis' Julia, is you heah?" he asked delightedly. "I been thinkin' it was mos' time you come along. You come to git me, ain't you? You ain' gwine let debbil catch Jupe." His matter-of-fact manner demanded a certain involuntary respect from his listeners; they watched him in puzzled wonder. Raising his manacled hands, he regarded them with vague surprise. "Dunno how dese got heah," he muttered, shaking his head, "but Mis' Julia gwine fix it. She'll 'splain ev'thing." Standing very straight, he turned to Nanny Lee with an old-fashioned shuffling bow. "Don' you worry, little lady, Mis' Julia gwine take care of me. Thanks, lady, thanks! Evenin', folks, mus' be goin'—— Yas'm, Miss Julia, I'se ready." He collapsed quietly upon the grass by the roses, where his upflung arms exposed the red stain on the left side of his sweater.

Nanny Lee flew over to him.

"JUPITER! Oh, poor Jupe! He was hurt! I told you he was hurt!" Judge Peabody gently lifted her away, while Kenneth and the police bent over the negro.

"He's done for."

"Bleedin' to death while he was talkin' so queer."

They spoke in husky undertones. A shocked hush had fallen upon the little group; pallor sifted like dust over their faces. Almost they had heard the whistle of that grim scythe; for an instant it was tangible, very near—a breath from chill, tuneless space.

"We'll get him out of here," murmured Officer Kelly.

"Take Nanny Lee up to the house, Uncle Pres," Kenneth urged.

"Come, child, you must come away," bade the old gentleman, mopping his brow and attempting to take her arm. But she pulled it from him, her black eyes blazing.

"You Yankees, you cold heartless Yankees!" she cried. "He was dying, and you said he was drunk! You let him die without a friendly word! Poor, poor stupid Jupiter; no wonder he thought white people were his enemies—— All he needed was a little humanity. And you Yankees think you are so wise and clever!" Spots of scarlet had whipped into her cheeks, and she bit her trembling under lip. The men eyed each other furtively.

"I admit the law is a clumsy thing at best, my dear, but consider that we aren't all blessed with your hypnotic power," urged the judge.

Meanwhile the men gathered up their burden.

"Just a dead nigger," Nanny Lee remarked bitterly. "Throw him in a ditch, even if he did save our lives!"

The police made their way slowly along the walk, with Mex shuffling listlessly before them.

"Be reasonable, Nanny Lee," besought her uncle, frankly troubled. "Your poor negro shall have a monument if you wish. But can't you see that it was due to your courage, not his virtue, that the scheme failed?"

Nanny Lee seemed not to hear him. She was regarding Kenneth, whose festoons of cretonne and bruised forehead gave him an oddly rakish air.

"So they tied you up, did they, like a nice box of candy?" she inquired politely. "And you heard all the excitement from the bushes? What made you finally decide it was safe to come out?"

Kenneth returned her stare deliberately.

"Nanny Lee, I believe you're bluffing," he said at last. "You're hiding behind a pose. Perhaps you are fooling yourself, too—— You aren't really angry, you're just homesick and blue and afraid you'll cry. But you don't—you really don't believe I lay in the bushes and played safe, do you?"

With her head held high she tried to meet his gaze, but in spite of herself she wilted. Her eyes dropped, and widened with horror as they fell upon his right arm.

"Kenneth, your arm!" she cried. "Your wrist—it looks queer—it's swollen! And—oh, look, Uncle Pres, it hangs the wrong way! It's broken. It's broken!"

"Never mind my wrist," Kenneth told her. "Something had to break or I couldn't have gotten loose. It took quite a pull—no idea bones were so tough. But that isn't important now——"

"As usual," she interrupted, with shaking voice, "you have let me act like a beast. You have succeeded again in being a martyr, haven't you? Why do you love to make me feel small and mean? Does it please that vanity of yours to feel so superior? Oh, it's cruel and unkind of you, Kenneth!"

KENNETH moved suddenly nearer to her. "It's no use," he said, "you can't bully me any more. You see, I've been thinking of what Uncle Pres said about the Tower of Babel, and he's dead right. You weren't afraid of that big negro because you understood him, and knew how to make him understand you! You got through his bluff—you hit him where he lived. Now I'm going to get through your bluff before I'm an hour older. Life's too short for misunderstandings. I've tried one way to reach you and failed; now I'll try another. I'll show you if Yankees are cold or not!"

She shrank back and raised one little brown hand as if to beg him for more time. It struck the judge with a pang that they were no longer children.

"You talk of humanity," went on Kenneth relentlessly, "but you have more for a half-crazy negro than you have for me. North or South, black or white, we all have our silly poses and try to hide our real feelings. I've been a fool, I know, but couldn't you see how miserable I was? Didn't you know I'd do anything to please you? And the more I tried the worse I failed."

"I—I didn't know. How could I know?" she asked faintly. "You seemed so—so terribly clever and dignified and sure of yourself."

"I've been half crazy; that's why I've acted like such a dub. The fact is I can't be just friends with you, Nanny Lee." Kenneth's voice had grown slightly hoarse. "It—it's got to be all or nothing. Didn't you know that? Is that why you've teased me? Were you—were you trying to get rid of me? Because if that's it, you'll have to say it plainly; I won't have another day of this confounded misunderstanding!"

Nanny Lee tried to speak, failed, and swallowed twice. After a vain search for her handkerchief, she managed to say:

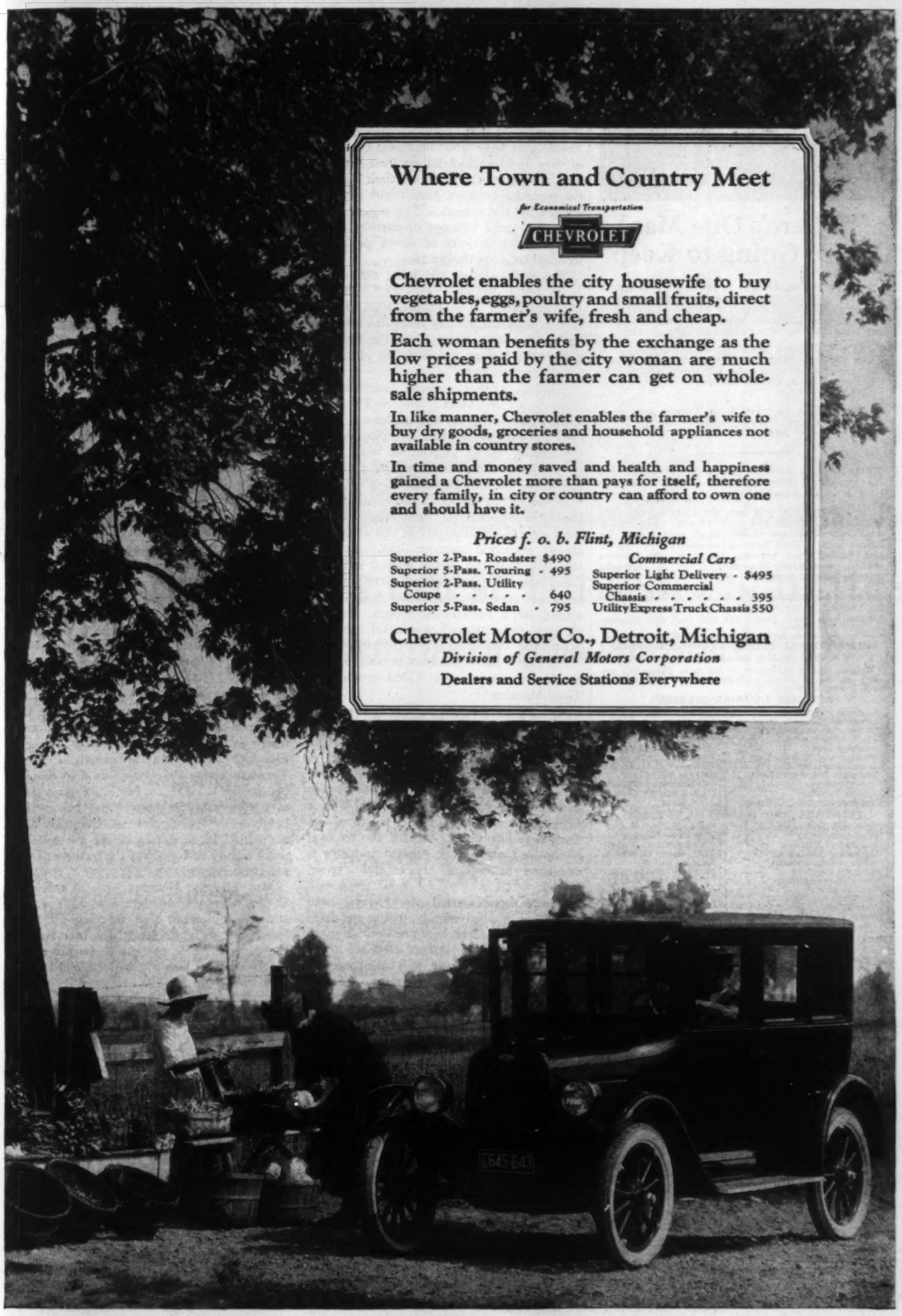
"I thought you always were laughing at me—and I dud—dud—didn't want you to see how terribly afraid I wa—was of you. Please lend me your handkerchief, Kenneth; I've got to c-cry!"

Kenneth's uninjured arm folded around her.

"Use my sleeve," he urged hospitably.

The judge, with elaborate caution, tiptoed up the walk. Events of the afternoon had shaken him, and he felt old and very much alone. As he approached the house, however, he found distinct comfort in the sight of the tea things arranged invitingly upon the veranda.

"Humph!" he murmured, as he ladled cracked ice into a tall glass. "I suppose they think they've invented all that stuff—— Older than Babel, older than Babel itself." Smiling a little, he settled down to his tea.



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Discovering Alaska with President Harding

[Continued from page 21]

Pulling over loops and through tunnels, tier upon tier, winding about like a figure eight, the train swept through the most massive snowsheds in the world—engineering triumphs that have stood up under avalanches of snow and ice which fall on their flat roofs. The photographers threw up their hands in despair—the beauties here could never be caught by the camera. The region was a Yosemite and a Yellowstone combined, with the glittering majesty of snowy peaks and ice-filled canyons thrown in.

The stations along the route are referred to as "Mile 13" and "Mile 79." The first stop was called "The Tunnel, Mile 59," and here a bountiful midday meal was served in the construction camp. Even the President and Mrs. Harding ate from tin plates and drank from tin cups.

Winding around a great mountain, the train circled the shores of historic Turnabout Inlet, so named by the Indians because of the ceaseless rush of the tide sweeping in from Cook Inlet, the roundabout sea route to the town of Anchorage which we were approaching by the railroad shortcut.

It was eleven o'clock in the evening when the train whistled for Anchorage, but the skies were as bright as day in this country of almost perpetual summer light. Even at this late hour the people flocked out from their little bungalow homes, surrounded by luxuriant vegetable and flower gardens, and waited for a Presidential speech. In that uncanny yellow sheen, of mingled dusk and dawn, the President grimly remarked:

"I don't know whether to address you people by wishing you 'Good evening' or 'Good Morning.'"

The city of Anchorage is only nine years old—a government-created municipality with the distinctive spirit of a Western boom town and inhabited by "hustlers." It is located upon a table-land above the harbor. There are wide paved streets, waterworks and electric lights. Uncle Sam sold over a million dollars' worth of lots on the town site. Anchorage has already secured the removal of the land office from Juneau, and now is ambitious to become the capital city of Alaska.

Some of us still carried copies of the Juneau newspaper in which an advertising merchant had wished the drenched Presidential party good luck on the trip, adding the pious afterthought, "We hope it will also rain in Anchorage!" But it did not rain in Anchorage. President Harding enjoyed a sunny drive through the streets to see the little homes in what the residents proudly referred to as "the suburbs." An Admiral line steamer at her wharf, just leaving for Seattle, waited so that all the passengers might see the President as he inspected the government-built docks. They can be used for only five summer months, but cargoes for Fairbanks and interior Alaska landed here in Anchorage during that period save the one hundred and fourteen mile expense of rail haulage and heavy grades over the mountains from Seward.

The whistle of Engine 618 called and we boarded our Pullman train for the Arctic. But there was not much sleep for the President or any of his party that night. Before we had fairly left Anchorage there came into view that magnificent tower of Heaven, Mt. McKinley—20,464 feet, over a mile higher than Pike's Peak and the highest point of land on our western hemisphere. A silver light overspread land and water directly toward the north. Above it gleamed a sea of gold with beautiful clouds outlined upon it, as if the islands below had been lifted into this transcendent glow. And from this golden sea, a hundred and fifty miles and more away, towered the imperial pile, defying artists, camera and pen alike. At this distance there seemed to be no ragged edges, no rugged peaks, no beetling cliffs, all was mellow in outline—soft contours robed in snowy white. Under the yellow tinge of Alaska's sunny midnight, Mt. McKinley seemed to melt into the heavens.

On puffed the special train of eleven coaches, up the Susitna River through the towering Talkeetna Mountains and over high iron bridges, which spanned almost bottomless canyons. A detour was made over the branch line to the coal mines at Chickaloon. Here were the wartime naval mines, which once hoped to rival the Pocohontas coal fields, but which now lie abandoned, a "million-dollar failure," for the coal found there could not be used, even after the installation of a $1.00-a-ton coal-washing plant. All the people have gone, the houses with tennis courts provided for the miners are now deserted and the place is in the hands of caretakers. It was a mournful procession that came down the long steps after viewing Uncle Sam's "Deserted Village." But there was comfort in the knowledge that elsewhere in Alaska lie great fields of really valuable coal.

BACK to the main line at Matanuska, the train passed through an agricultural area where garden truck for the miners is raised. Livestock on the farms apparently is scarce. There are thirty times as many dogs as pigs in Alaska—17,000 to be exact—and yet, mysteriously, everybody has bacon for breakfast. The figures on livestock and agriculture in all Alaska would not equal a small county in Iowa, yet the fertility of the soil is phenomenal.

Mrs. Florence Hoffman, wife of a deputy U. S. Marshall, brought aboard luscious strawberries picked that morning. I took two boxes to the President who marveled at the flavor of these near-Arctic berries as he ate them for breakfast without waiting to have them "stemmed."

The daylight brightened as we passed through this region of farms. The chicken coops, we noticed, were covered with blankets, to produce an artificial night and send the hens to roost. A common report around Matanuska is that the chickens here double their laying capacity, laying two eggs every twenty-four hours.

At a station called Montana, or Milepost 209, we stopped at a large black-fox farm. Out from their little kennels behind wire netting flocked baby foxes and their mothers, brothers and sisters, to eye us craftily. Frequently these baby foxes are nursed by the mother cats of the household until they are a few weeks old. Thereafter, it is unwise to leave them with their foster mother, for the sly baby foxes will turn on the one who fed them and kill her.

[Continued on page 112]

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Discovering Alaska with President Harding

[Continued from page 110]

The foxes, fed on inexpensive food such as fish, are killed in the fall and shipped to fur centers, the value of the pelts ranging from $30 to $200. A large percentage of all the black-fox furs now sold is said to come from these foxes reared on ranches which handle fifty to a hundred fox. There are over two thousand fox on these farms, constituting a growing portion of the Alaskan fur industry which yields an annual revenue of over $1,000,000. This figure, by the way, does not include the seal of the Pribilof Islands, where there are herds of 525,000 seals, and only surplus males are taken. The annual revenue for Uncle Sam from seal is about three and one half millions.

Dinner served at Curry, the railroad division point, was a seven-course table d'hote that had all the niceties of a banquet at the Waldorf. The only thing missing was fresh milk. By this time, however, we had cultivated a "condensed-milk appetite."

All of the regular passenger trains remain over night at Curry. Our train was an exception, for it pushed on to Broad Pass that night. This is near the summit of the Alaskan Range and we were "parked" there for the night, in our sleeping cars. Broad Pass is the summit of the Alaskan Rocky Mountains and is the lowest railway pass over the Rockies. The elevation is only 2,300 feet while the lowest in the United States is 7,000 feet.

The daylight view of Mt. McKinley, now sixty miles away, furnished another hour of wonder. The train took us through grazing lands of reindeer which are under the supervision of the Bureau of Education, because this bureau of the Interior Department instructs the natives in reindeer breeding. As early as 1921, over $100,000 worth of reindeer meat was sold in the United States. The range is sufficient for 10,000,000 of these animals which may some day constitute a new meat supply for all North America.

Passing up Windy River, we noticed telegraph wires stretched on three-legged poles, arranged together after the manner of an Indian tepee. This structure is necessary because the wind sweeping across the great plains would blow down any ordinary pole placed in the ground, and because of the difficulty of keeping a pole in ground that is here frozen for 200 feet below the surface.

Mt. McKinley National Park at last! Three thousand square miles of untouched nature, and the world's unsurpassed wild-game preserve. Here I met Harry Karstens, the guardian of this domain, with two rangers as assistants. This is Uncle Sam's largest national park, and Karstens is pleading for a modest appropriation for roads. It was Harry Karstens who first scaled Mt. McKinley and made good on Doctor Cook's pretensions. He was fifty-two days making the ascent! He carried with him silk tents to sleep in and home-made pemmican of moose meat and pork. At times his party waited for days in isolation high above the clouds, waiting for storms to pass.

The same locomotive, No. 618, was used on the entire trip to Fairbanks and return, although at one point going over the mountains it broke down under the strain and had to pull one section of the train across and then return for the other. President Harding climbed into the cab at Healy and pulled the throttle like an old timer—and kept his eyes "on the air." Mrs. Harding sat on the fireman's seat opposite and old 618 rolled and rocked over the rails at a lively pace—but the President's stop was a small-scale sample of an earthquake.

The President greeted the "huskies" at Kobe, terminus of the overland dog-team mail trail to the Kuskokwim and Iditarod gold district which has replaced the famous Rainy Pass Route. He was warned not to pat these wolf-like dogs on the head, for while very faithful, they are not affectionate and cannot even be fed from the hand. A good husky leader dog is well worth some $300, and will obey none other than his master. The dog-teams have been known to travel sixty miles a day in the Derby dog races from Nome to Fairbanks. The farmers use the dogs with small wagons in summer, as well as to pull sleds in winter, and keep them in dog barns—characteristic little buildings that we noticed all along the way.

NOW we were getting into the Yukon District and we stopped at Nenana, on the Tanana River, near its juncture with the mighty Yukon that flows onward to Bering Sea. At Nenana the Golden Spike was driven by President Harding, marking the completion of the Alaska Railroad to standard gauge from the narrow gauge that had previously been operated to Fairbanks, about thirty miles away.

One-third of the coal used on Alaska railroads comes from the Nenana River Valley. The coal is also marketed along the Alaskan coast from Ketchikan to Kodiak, the ancient Russian capital of Alaska.

The town of Nenana is situated in the center of an ambitious agricultural region. One enterprising American had brought a harvester up here, but found it impossible to get the machine to his farm because of the lack of roads. Blueberries grow in wild profusion, and blueberry pies are the popular favorite in the lunchrooms. These Alaskan lunchrooms, by the way, are distinctive, the high stools at the counters are provided with restful rocking-chair backs, and people congregate there, making the place restaurant, club and hotel lobby combined.

"Farthest north on steel rails!" The train was entering Fairbanks in the glow of a sunset that lingered far on toward midnight. The city is located on both sides of the Chena River and the main street overlooks the log wharves, once lined with Yukon river boats—now deserted since the railroad arrived. Old Sol seemed to sit like a huge bowl on the horizon, just "moving over" a bit every twenty-four hours. The moon was not to be crowded out, and here was the spectacle of the sun shining amicably with the moon in the same night sky! The country roundabout is rough and wildly picturesque—no towering mountains near at hand—a country of the Alaska plains. Hereabout are the "creeks" or valleys from which have been taken millions in nuggets and gold dust. The old-time terminal and deserted narrow-gauge engines recalled the stirring days when gold-dust, weighed on a scale, was the currency that passed over the counter or bar.

Immense bouquets of all kinds of flowers were given to every member of the party, and

[Continued on page 114]

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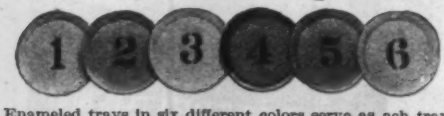

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Discovering Alaska with President Harding

[Continued from page 112]

luscious red tomatoes—pride of the region—were served us at a neighboring farm while belles of the town stood by with saltcellars to season them for us. A quick, dusty drive was made to the Agricultural and Mining College, the farthest north educational institution in the world. The first class of this college—the class of 1923—consisted of one sturdy lad, John Stanley Sexton. There are about fifty students now, and all provided with fine classrooms and libraries. Already they have filled one room with rare mining and agricultural specimens from all parts of Alaska.

The Alaska railroad opens up four thousand miles of interior navigable river routes, and makes a route direct to Nome and St. Michael down the river as well as to Dawson and the land of gold up the river.

Fairbanks, that harbored perhaps 20,000 people in gold-rush days, now has homes for fifteen hundred. The houses are cozy, flower-decked log bungalows, the chinks often filled with moss and mud in lieu of plaster. Idleness here is a crime. There is always something to do and common labor gets seventy-five cents an hour. There are no servants in Fairbanks. Everybody does his own work or the neighbors drop in to help when an emergency arises. In fact, in Alaska there are no poor, no mendicants begging by the wayside. There is no class distinction; no one is questioned concerning his past, or why he has come to Alaska.

Here one has a real comprehension of the empire of Alaska which embraces more land than all of England, Scotland, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and Finland combined. The potato yield is three hundred bushels to an acre. Turnips, carrots and sugar beets flourish without the aid of commercial fertilizer. Wheat yields twenty to twenty-five bushels an acre. Red-topped and yellow-flowered alfalfa grow abundantly.

The "daylight night" was chilly, but the sun still smiled on the greening crops. Farms in this great interior Alaska are located on the sunny side of the slopes only. The ground is frozen to a great depth, but thaws out year by year as it is cultivated. Large fields of wheat and barley and clover were rapidly approaching the harvest days. Because of its rapid growth, hay must be cut frequently to retain its succulence.

Alaskans take their wonderful flowers as a matter of course. The territory grows more flowers per capita than does the U. S. A. I remember especially the petunias and the Alaskan rose which is much larger than our old-fashioned wild rose, but has the same rich color and perfume.

It was midnight when we left the farm, to attend a banquet given at the Model Lunchroom on "Main Street." The lunch counters were already filled, for many miners had "mushed in" from miles around to meet the President. Ham and eggs cost one dollar a plate, but the portion would feed a family. Pennies, we had found, are never used, and seldom a dime. Practically everything costs a quarter—even a shoeshine or newspaper. After more tomatoes and club sandwiches that would have made Oscar of the Waldorf envious, the party started on a tour of the old "restricted district," now deserted, a ghostly memory of the wild days when the demimonde queens reigned. There were back streets and secret passages, where victims might be hustled out of this carnival of crime, dead or alive, without fear of detection.

WANDERING back, we ran against the fire hydrants. There were no lamp posts to collide with, but these hydrants were astonishing. They were encased in boxes, with steam pipes operating even in the summer days—for remember, Fairbanks is perched upon frozen ground. Around and around the streets we wandered all night looking to each other like ghosts in the unreal light of a motion-picture studio. We could not think it was night here. The only realistic thing was the continuous crow of the chickens that lasted until morning.

The snug little log bungalows in Fairbanks appealed greatly to President Harding. One could imagine them in the long winter nights when the families snuggle about the stoves. In each house there are porthole ventilators. During the winters the children watch the sun rise through the window, and shout with glee as old "Sol" makes his arc from one telephone pole to the next—counting that a day's work. The sheen on the snow and the glow of the aurora borealis prevent anything like inky darkness and there is scarcely a day when the children cannot be bundled up and rolled out in the snow for play and exercise in the long, six-months' winter night.

The President had been greeted that day in the ball park at ten A. M., when the sun is hottest. The ball games in Fairbanks usually are played at the convenient hour of midnight! It is cooler at that time and there is no glare of the sun to impair the vision of the players. But despite the daytime heat, the grandstand that morning was filled and the President made one of the happiest addresses of his tour. Chairman Hurley submitted each request that had been filed to a vote of the people assembled. It was like the old forum or town-hall days, as the citizens responded *viva voce* to every plan and suggestion made by the President. In all the history of the Republic, no President was ever actually closer to his people in executive deliberation than was Warren G. Harding on that day.

The great park was rimmed with automobiles, some of whose owners had driven three hundred miles. Every fourth man in Fairbanks possesses an automobile. Distances mean little in Alaska—there are so many of them. They don't live by time-tables, calendars, or ninety-day notes. Everything, as in South America, is counted by seasons—and a thousand-mile trip is a holiday jaunt over the trail, because time doesn't count.

Fairbanks has a live daily newspaper with cable news dispatches. President Harding "set type" in the office and helped make up the forms, but said he couldn't tell whether he was getting out a "morning" or an "evening" paper.

The Fairbanks show windows are not so far behind those on Fifth Avenue. Alaskan women in summertime wear white lawn dresses, and the fashions have followed the flag up here to the edge of the Arctic. Many newsstands appropriate big show windows. People read more newspapers and books per capita in Alaska during the winter months than do the people of any state in the Union.

In the partially-completed hotel Nordale—the only hotel in Alaska where the President spent the night—he relaxed in the midst of the almost continuous hours of work in speaking and official business. He had been absorbing and acquiring new information as had no other person in the party.

"Fairbanks appears a seemly place to take a reckoning," he mused, as he filled his pipe. "We are turning southward again. Let's go over the situation.

"Alaska, I have come to see, is our great pioneer reserve—and these are the right people here now to meet its problems by a slow, but permanent development.

"The old notion of capitalists swooping down on Alaska to make their pile and get out has passed. It is now a question of stayers—men who are equal to the struggle. Let Alaska be for real Alaskans. The farms we have seen prove what can be done, but there must be more markets and more people. The country is a great food reserve. Altogether, I am most hopeful of Alaska and its future—but let there be no reckless sacrifice of resources with quick profits.

"While the products of the fisheries in Alaska are greater than the wealth of the mines, there is danger of exhausting the supply—more restrictions would seem to be necessary. Forest conservation, frankly, I see now is not too drastic, as I find no complaints among the people here against holding firm for the utilization of timber lands upon a systematic basis.

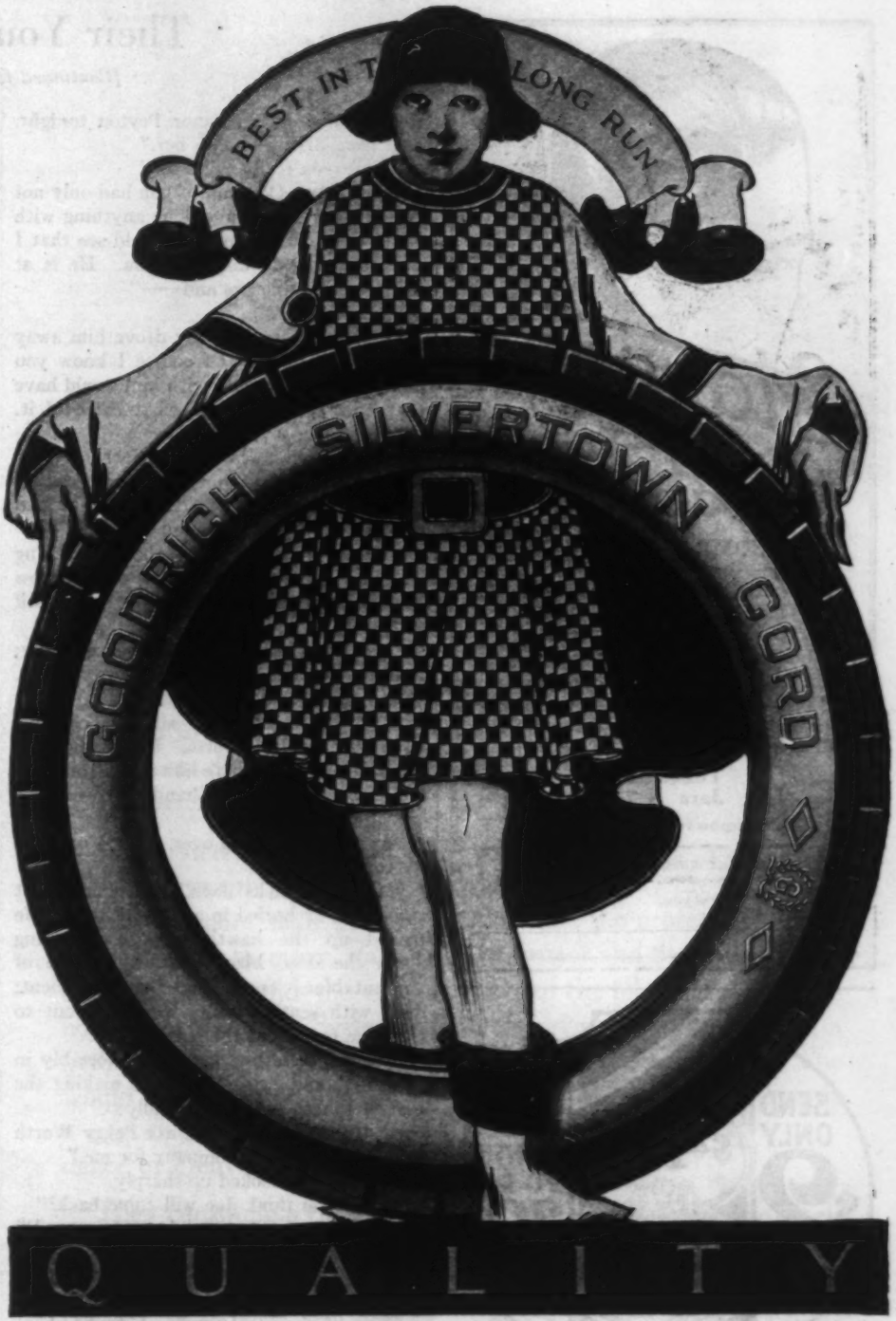
"Coal is being mined satisfactorily. Perhaps we need some changes, but the coal is unlimited. Alaskan coal will come into its own under the natural economic laws. The oil development should be encouraged, but to develop these oil resources of the north will require millions of private capital under the lure of returns as reflected in the California and Mexican fields. The great problem now is the lack of transportation.

"Agriculture in Alaska is relative to other development, but needs liberal encouragement. If fisheries, forests and mines are looted there is no hope for farms, but a permanent well-rounded policy of substantial development will make agriculture a factor in the dreams of statehood.

"This railroad that we have just come over is a triumph of American skill and perseverance against obstacles. We must honor the men who have given us this splendid achievement. If the world only knew of this gorgeous scenic route through the superlative grandeur of her scenery, Alaska could count on a substantial revenue from tourists who are certain to come and carry the news to the far corners of the world of this wonderland of the earth. It is our extreme frontier and Alaska is on its way to an expansion of fur products, for fur trade in Alaska is like unto cotton in Alabama and corn to the Midwest. With rational generosity, shortening the distance between Alaska and Washington, working with these people, we will have in Alaska the making of a great state."

Thus before President Harding went to bed that night I heard expounded the policy of sane development of our frontier empire that the President had already evolved from his observations, that he later sketched in his Seattle speech, and that he would have urged upon the nation had not the great calamity of San Francisco put a tragic stop to all his labors.

In McClure's, next month,
"Harding's Last Days in Alaska"



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Their Youngest Son

[Continued from page 28]

He is dining with Eleanor Peyton tonight. You have driven him to her."

"You—you really think so?"

"Yes, I do. Oh, Dan, if you had only not interfered, I could have done anything with him! Only this morning, I could see that I was beginning to influence him. He is at an impressionable age and——"

"I know he is."

"And you very foolishly drove him away from my influence. Of course I know you didn't dream your talk with him would have that effect, but you see what came of it. What did you say to him?"

"I—I talked to him like a father. Told him to keep away from—from my stenographer or I'd fire her. Told him she'd be glad to marry any rich man's son and——"

"The very worst thing—the worst thing you could have said!" cried his wife. "Now he'll feel sorry for her and sorry for himself and——"

"And I told him I wanted the board money; that I was tired of supporting grown sons. That—that was about all I said."

"All! All! Daniel Hicks—all! You couldn't have said anything worse. It was the very thing calculated to drive him away from you. He needs to be led by the hand of love——"

"Huh!"

"And gradually won over. Now, I'm afraid it's too late."

On Daniel Hicks' face was a complacent smile that he buried in a cupped hand. He picked up the hawthorn vase, admiring again the dead black without a trace of vagrant blue. Sentiment—pure sentiment; done with sentimentality. A clean cut to the bone to cut out the poison virus.

Mrs. Hicks settled herself comfortably in her chair, and, with the air of making the best of things, said thoughtfully:

"After all, I believe I'll ask Peggy Worth for a visit; she'll be company for me."

Daniel Hicks looked up sharply.

"Then you think Joe will come back?"

"No—I'm afraid not, though of course I'll do my best. But—there is Murray. And I won't ask her till they are about ready to return from Jamaica."

"Yes, there is Murray. I forgot him. By the way, did the detective show up?"

Mrs. Hicks' face went a shade paler in the spots washed clean of powder.

"Why, yes, Dan. He came and we gave him all the information we could. He thinks—that he can locate the bracelet. Oh, I do hope he does." Her fingers twisted her damp handkerchief into a mere string that she quickly hid in the palm of her tightly-clenched hand.

"He'll report to me as soon as he does. I mean to put a stop to this—this robbery stuff."

"OH, dear! Troubles never come singly, do they, Dan?"

"Troubles?"

"Yes. First, having my bracelet stolen; then Joe—poor Joe leaving home in anger. What a wretched world! My poor boy facing the hard world all alone and penniless. I'm a broken-hearted mother."

Sentimentalism—weak and whining. He looked at her curiously, appraisingly. She was his wife—this woman—the one he had selected from many others.

Joe alone and penniless—a man. Nell Peyton—alone and penniless, too—a mere girl. Yet curiously Henrietta had shown no feeling of sympathy toward her. And Nell Peyton would have dared any one to be sorry for her.

IF she were sorry for herself now, if she missed Joe, if she heard from Joe, Daniel Hicks was never able to discover in the weeks following Joe's departure.

Not until a typewritten letter came from Joe was his name mentioned. Nell laid the letter before him with a check pinned to the page that stated briefly that a check for past-due board was enclosed.

Daniel Hicks fingered the letter as if it were a priceless bit of tapestry to be handled with affectionate care, then he unpinned the check and folded it carefully, stowing it away in his waistcoat pocket.

Nell, standing at his elbow with a half smile on her generous lips, said in a low voice, as if she suppressed an affectionate epithet and restrained an impulse to lean over and touch the bent head:

"Joe is driving a truck for the West Coast Export Company and is getting thirty dollars a week, with a chance of getting into the shipping department. They are making a place for him because they want young men with Eastern training. It's a concern of young men."

When she had finished, Daniel Hicks turned to her and said in a voice calculated to have brought dismay to a timid soul:

"My dear young lady, will you please confine your conversation to business? I'm not at all interested in the young person you mention—I do not care what his prospects are! What he does and what he says are of no concern to me."

But his eyes were dancing.

"The young cub," he thought, "to send me a check as if I were an entire stranger. 'Yours truly'—I'd like to thrash him. Prouder than Lucifer. Like his dad—like his dad. The West is still the place; I'd go there myself if I were younger."

Strangely enough, Nell Peyton did not bridle or appear to resent her employer's gruffness. Instead, she smiled broadly, and, picking up her notebook, left the private office.

Often in the months that passed, the sight of familiar writing on letters addressed to Eleanor Peyton arrested Daniel Hicks' attention as he paused at his stenographer's desk, and he would linger with the air of a child who craves notice and attention, but who is too proud to make advances.

Nell would look up with a disarming smile and say, with meaning sweetness:

"Did you want me for dictation, Mr. Hicks?"

As often as not, he would say, "Yes," and keep her beside his desk, pencil poised over her notebook, while he sat in apparent meditation. He seemed to be waiting, waiting for her to say something, but she was apt to be blandly oblivious of his expectant silence. But once she announced, with an air of pride that could not be suppressed:

"Joe has been transferred to Seattle; they are trying him out in a branch there. It's his ideas they need. He knows instinctively the things they can successfully

handle. He played in a local tennis tournament and won a cup and is going down to San Francisco in a seaplane next week. He's gained ten pounds."

With a theatrical frown, Daniel Hicks scanned his stenographer's glowing face as though much displeased with her, and said icily:

"I do not care to hear another word about that young man. He does not interest me—not in the least."

But Nell only smiled as at a willful child and held her pencil ready, as with renewed interest in business and a fresh sparkle in his eye and a gay twist of tongue, he would dictate.

Some days unusually fat letters postmarked Seattle and addressed to Nell would catch his attention, but no amount of guile would wring a word from her save that pertaining strictly to business, and then he would be really cross and mope like a spoiled child. The letters were certainly long; there must be news, yet she would tell him nothing, and his wife, after the first rebuff when she would have told him of his youngest son, did not even mention his letters. He did not even know that she heard. He rather hoped that she did not.

Russell and Helen were again planning a late winter trip, when a sparkling stone on Eleanor Peyton's finger caused Daniel Hicks more than a little uneasiness. Months had passed since Joe's name had been mentioned. He recalled with distinct annoyance a tall, brisk, bustling sort of chap who had been waiting for Nell at the close of the work-day on numerous occasions. She seemed abstracted, too—less absorbed in the office routine than formerly. He did not seem to discover on her desk so many fat letters addressed in the familiar boyish scrawl. Once a telegram came for her, but she read it without change of expression and put it in her purse.

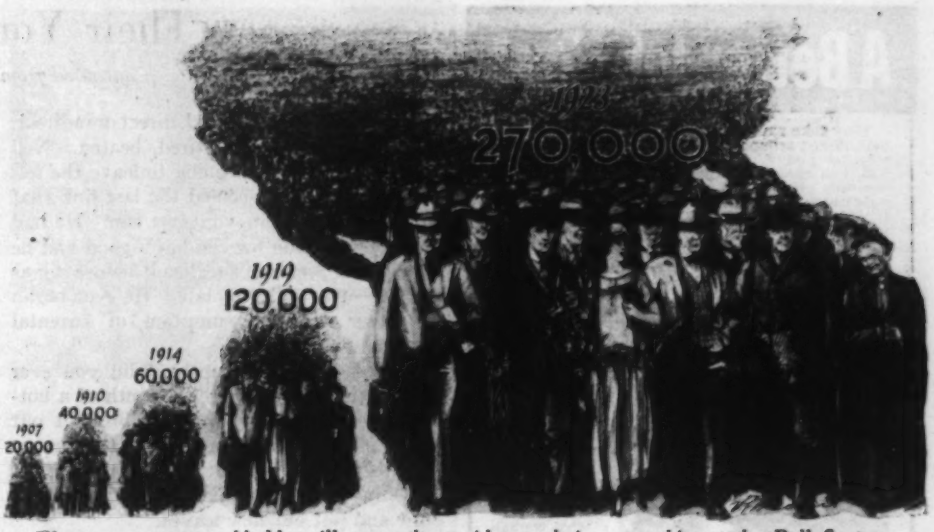
IT all bothered him, but the ring on her left hand seemed blatantly self-explanatory. After all, she wasn't going to wait for Joe to make good and come back for her. Maybe Joe wasn't making good. Maybe she had no more patience—no more vision than the majority of women. Maybe she lacked faith, after all, in that willful, lovable bundle of manhood.

He grew graver in these last few months Very grave one day when he came into the office with a package that, opened, proved to be a jewel case holding an expensive trinket. He looked at it long and earnestly and locked it away in his desk, where other similar packages were stored. The robberies at his house had not completely stopped. Now and then a ring—a brooch disappeared. That much he knew when he missed the trifles occasionally worn by his wife.

The climax came one night when the string of pearls disappeared and Mrs. Hicks wept with real and passionate regret. The pearls were, in her mind, inextricably bound up in sentiment. Her husband's gift—the souvenir of his success—the beginning of the upward flight that marked a turning point in his career.

It was a turning point now for Daniel Hicks. When, at a later date, he added a string of pearls to the collection of jewels in the desk drawer, he sat for a long time in deep abstraction and then sent for Eleanor Peyton.

[Continued on page 118]



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Their Youngest Son

[Continued from page 117]

There had been no word, direct or indirect, from Joe. He felt old, tired, beaten. Nell had told him she was going to leave the following month. It seemed the last link that cut him off from his youngest son. He had meant everything for the boy's good and he hoped that Joe would realize it before it was too late—tragically too late. He even began to waver in his assumption of parental judgment.

"Nell," he said abruptly, "did you ever see a plant fresh from the warmth of a hothouse wither and droop when brought out into the open? You know what the change does to them—they wither, don't they?"

"Only until they take root. Then they grow and put out new leaves."

HE looked up at her hopefully and waited for her to go on.

"I know what's worrying you, Mr. Hicks—it's Joe. Well, you needn't worry. He——" She leaned forward and, with a soft flush spreading up to the line of her hair and down to her trig collar, whispered a few words that electrified him into an upright posture from his dejected lounging pose; restored the sparkle to his dulled eyes. A veritable elixir of life!

Then she turned and hurried out of the office—as if she could not bear to see that pitiful display of emotion in a man who was trying to beat down all emotion.

That night even his wife, diverted momentarily from her own affairs, noted the unwonted rise in spirits and solicitously asked, as she might have in the old days when their future hung on his business: "Must have made a good deal today, Dan; something seems to have put you in a good humor for a change. What is it? Some new business?"

"Yes—business." Oh, God of trade—how many lies are uttered in thy name!

In the warmth and rosy ease that surrounded Daniel Hicks, his wife seemed to find a propitious state in which to broach a subject that called for attention.

"Dan—I want to tell you that Murray is going to be married."

"Married! Murray! What do you mean?"

"He is going to marry Peggy Worth. It happened last night and——"

"By Jove! No—you don't mean that!"

"Why not?"

"Murray!"

"Yes; she should be glad to get him. He will be well off some day. He is handsome, amiable, clever and——"

"And a thief!" Daniel Hicks rose, pointing one stubby, trembling finger at her. "And you made him one; you and your infernal sentimentalism. You were sorry for him. You robbed yourself to give to him. Shared your dress allowance with him, closed your eyes to his weaknesses. Financed him in the existence of a hothouse plant. To marry him to a young, innocent girl—it's a crime!"

He reached in his coat pocket and brought out the jewels that, in an overflow of good feeling induced by Nell Peyton's whispered words, he had decided to return to his wife.

"Here—here are all the jewels that have disappeared from this house from time to time. How many you actually pawned to get money for him, I don't know. Nor do I know which ones he stole and pawned himself. You probably know. I'm sure that you would never have pawned the pearls—too much sentimentalism in you for that. But why did he steal! Woman—you knew that my son was a thief—and you made him one."

"I—I didn't know, Dan—I swear I didn't know, till—till the day you sent the detective here. I—I wasn't sure. He confessed then." She wept. "After all, he was my son. What could I do? I—I talked to him and——"

"And, knowing this, you arranged to marry him to the Worth girl?"

"He'll settle down; he promised me. And she—she has plenty of money."

"She won't have it long with his fingers in it."

"Oh, the trouble a mother has! A thankless task—that of bringing children into the world. Trying to do the best for them and then—then—— I didn't tell you that Helen and Russell are talking of divorce. And Joe, my baby, living all alone in the cold, hard world. It is too much; it is more than I can stand. Heaven knows where he is or what he is doing."

"You needn't worry about Joe. He's all right."

"I don't believe it. I wrote him and sent him some money and he sent it back. Said he was driving a truck and making good money. Driving a truck! My poor boy—my baby! I begged him to come home. He didn't even answer my letter. Of course you meant well, but—it made him bitter. You drove him away."

"And a good job it was. He's coming home tomorrow and he's going to marry Nell Peyton. He's safe now."

"You—you drove him into the arms of that creature. I am——"

"Don't call her 'that creature.' Nell's worth a dozen of any girl I know. Family is clean-blooded all the way through. She's fit to marry a crown prince, if there's one left she'd have. You tried to spoil him with your whining sentimentalism—tried to choke the manhood out of him with overindulgence. Weeds that would choke the life out of any young growing thing. I knew if he had anything in him he wouldn't stand the way I talked to him. He's safe—safe! My son!"

He left his wife sitting there with her handkerchief dabbing ineffectually at the flood of tears that ran down her cheeks. But there were no tears in his eyes. Joy shone there, and plans and expectation.

It was all there, increased tenfold when he went to the office the next morning. In the outer office, Nell Peyton was opening letters as usual and sorting them. He stopped beside her desk and laid an affectionate hand on her shoulder.

"WHEN, Nell—when's he coming? You don't think he—he's still angry with me, do you?"

Nell surreptitiously wiped a tear from her cheek and said, with unconcealed tenderness:

"No. I've told him all about it. He knows now why you did what you did. You had your own way, you dear old hypocrite! I knew you too well not to see through you. He's waiting for you."

"Here? Joey's here?" Unconsciously the childish name sprang out.

"In your office."

As he opened the door a lean, boyish figure rose and with a step was at his side.

"You young scamp—you son of a gun!" said Daniel Hicks, as he clutched his son's shoulders and shook him savagely. Then, timidly, he kissed him on the cheek while Joe, frank and unashamed, kissed him heartily, squeezing his hand with a bear-like grasp.

Questions and answers—questions and answers battledored and shuttlecocked across the room until Nell entered quietly.

"They want to know what the fight's about," she said dryly.

"Come here," Daniel Hicks said sternly. "You're still in my employ, miss, aren't you?"

"Yes." The tone was a bit puzzled.

"All right, then—kiss your daddy." He caught her up with a hug that made her gasp. "Here!" He reached in his desk drawer and brought out a bank book. "Here's a nest egg I've been keeping for you and——"

"OH, no dad!" Joe protested. "I earn enough for us both. I——"

"Don't talk back to me or—I'll thrash you, young man. Here is all your confounded board money and one hundred dollars added for each week you paid me board. You can give it to Nell."

He took a carefully-folded typewritten half page from his waistcoat pocket and at sight of it, Joe laughed.

"Here—here's the only letter I ever had from one of my sons that wasn't a request for money."

"My letter, eh?"

"Yes. I'll give it back to you some day—when you have sons of your own. Come on," he said, "I just remembered that I haven't had breakfast. After breakfast we'll go down and get a marriage license, and after that find a preacher somewhere and——"

"Oh, not this morning. Not like this. I——"

Nell's protests were overruled.

Five minutes later, out on the street, a rosy-faced beautiful girl, her face shining with excitement and happiness, was hustled along by two boys—one on each side of her; one was nearly twenty-four, the other nearly sixty.

"Joe," the gray-haired boy chuckled across Nell's shoulder, "your mother is marrying Peggy Worth to Murray. See what you missed!"

"I know—I do have the worst luck!" Joe complained, with an adoring, sidelong glance at the girl beside him that was more eloquent than a caress.

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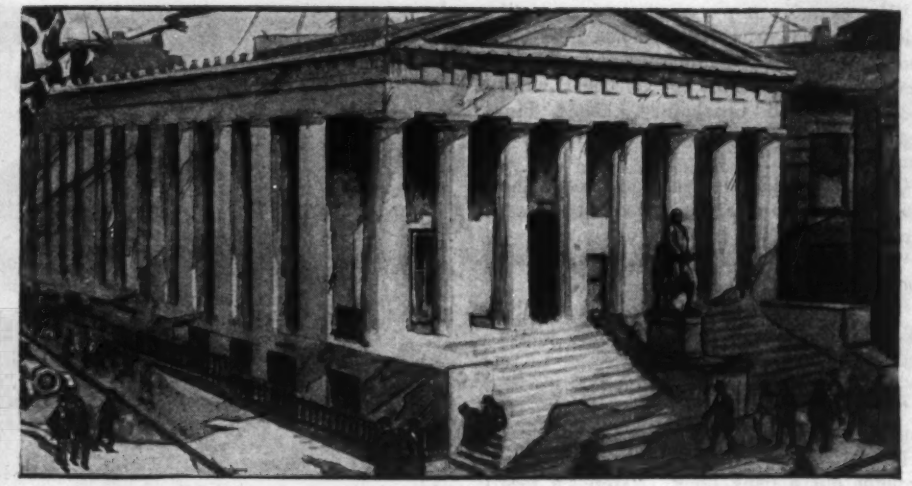

Railroad Securities

By Franklin K. Sprague

THERE are two outstanding reasons why there is an almost universal interest in the somewhat involved railroad situation which confronts the country today. In the first place, railroad securities are widely distributed in the hands of investors, and secondly, it is freely admitted that the financial and business prosperity of the country is allied so closely with railroad prosperity that the two are really inseparable. There might of course be a temporary realization of business success, with the carriers in a hazardous financial position. But it is beyond possibility that permanency of business accomplishment could be builded apart from a rational development and stabilization of the railroads.

There is every reason, then, why the question of the railroads should be to the forefront at this time. For several years investors in railroad securities for various reasons have been perturbed over the position of the carriers, and many of the inquiries which I have received have asked concerning the future of outstanding railroad obligations. Fear for the position of such securities apparently has been engendered by low earnings, and the low prices of underlying bonds as compared with quotations prevailing in the pre-war period.

In general I might say that those securities which were gilt-edge in the pre-war days are still of that classification, since they have the same measure of interest in a property valuation which has not depreciated, but which has increased—if we are to consider replacement value as opposed to initial cost. But it is true that the value of the securities has fallen, as represented in market price. This, however, is a reflection of conditions which have no bearing upon security of principal.

Bonds are sensitive to money rates and money rates in the war and post-war period have been high. Consequently, bonds have fallen in value to accommodate themselves to the decreased purchasing power of the dollar, which means a lowering of coupon value. It might be said, therefore, that bonds are cheap at present levels, or at least they would appear to be so, if we consider yield at the present time in comparison with yield on the same securities ten to fifteen years ago.

A list of fifteen railroad representatives in 1902 afforded for that year an average yield of 3.86 per cent. In 1905, the average yield on these same bonds was 3.89 per cent, and in 1913 it was 4.42 per cent. In what manner the readjustment of the after-war period affected bonds is indicated to a certain extent by the fact that in 1920 the average yield of the fifteen issues was 5.79 per cent—the highest rate in twenty years. This increase in yield naturally was brought about in only one way: by reduction in market value of the securities. Thus far this year the average yield has been in the neighborhood of 5 per cent.

It is doubtful whether commodity prices, living costs and the like, will ever recede to a line coinciding with that of 1913. Therefore, it is not reasonable to suppose that railroad bonds will show the low yield that they did in the pre-war period, since the coupon will not have the equivalent purchasing power in terms of commodities. There is, however, no reason to suppose that the lowering of price and the increase of yield have any relation to the value of securities except in particular instances. Furthermore, bonds will tend to rise in price as they approach maturity, and, if they are not paid off, the debts will at least be refunded into obligations bearing an interest rate that is commensurate with conditions at the time of refinancing.

ANOTHER reason for feeling confident of the position of railroad securities is that they must be safeguarded so that the groundwork will be provided for the essential financing which will be necessary to accommodate the increased business growth of the country, and the more important position which this country occupies with relation to world markets. As a matter of fact, the record of recent months has been a highly satisfactory one in American railroading. The carriers have closely approximated that mention of 6 per cent in the Transportation Act, which by the way is not a guarantee, as so many have thought it.

It is supposed to be a reasonable return on property valuation, and this valuation is being determined not on the basis of replacement costs, but on a level which strikes between initial cost and present record figures for construction. The fact that earnings are increasing is certainly a reason for confidence in the ability of the railroads to meet fixed charges—which are charges prior to any dividend distributions.

In their future financing, the railroads will have to be in a position to compete with industrial and other securities which may be put out, and it is for this reason that they must be in a position to command the respect and confidence of investors. This cannot be

accomplished except through adequate earnings. So far as railroad stocks are concerned, they will probably never return to the field of speculation which they occupied some fifteen or twenty years ago when Great Northern and many others sold at record high prices.

The element of speculation has been steadily subtracted through rate regulation by the Interstate Commerce Commission. This regulation limits earnings, but in limiting earnings, there must be a compensation to safeguard against a drop in earnings below the point of affording adequate protection to owners of railroad securities, and it is not unlikely that some method of bringing this to pass will be worked out. It is unreasonable to ask investors to buy securities and limit earnings upon those securities in good times, while forcing them to shoulder the difficulties that arise in bad times.

This is not adverse to railroad securities, for the very difficulty itself will bring its remedy, and the elimination of speculation will do much to bring about a stabilization of such investments. At present the public owns the railroads, and it is not strange that the public should be displaying a marked interest in its investment, and the outlook for the future. Where earnings are adequate, there is a method of financing to be pursued that has not been available in recent years. This is through new stock offerings.

It was contemplation of this method of financing that prompted the raising of the dividend rates on New York Central from 5 to 7 per cent. There is still a carry-over of doubt regarding railroad stocks, for many of those now outstanding are far below par and many are not paying dividends. It is necessary, therefore, that the railroads from now on be permitted a fair share of earnings so that they may go back to the principle of financing through stocks, and thereby hold down fixed charges. I believe that this finally will eventuate, and that in the course of the next few years, more of the railroads will be putting out stock offerings to cover expansion programs. Such a course would accentuate the security behind present outstanding bonds.

Financial Questions and Answers

Q. I am thirty-eight years old. I have a wife and three small children. I carry $14,000 life insurance. I shall be grateful to you for advice in our investment problems. We have $2,000 invested in good preferred stocks: $5,000 in Liberty bonds; a first mortgage of $4,000 on a property in our city which is being paid to us at $50 a month, and $2,000 in cash which we desire to invest. My salary is rent and $2,700 a year. Would you advise me to convert my Liberty bonds into bonds which pay a higher rate? Do you think that first mortgage real estate bonds, such as those of S. W. Straus & Company or George M. Forman & Company are a wise investment? Are these companies reliable?

A. I think your investment as it now stands is particularly strong and would not advise that you make any change in your holdings of Liberty bonds. Let the Liberty bonds remain as a basis for your investment plan, and with relation to the two thousand dollars which you have to invest you could put that into high-grade real estate mortgage bonds, with the idea of increasing the yield on your total investments.

Bear in mind, always, that real estate bonds must be judged, for the most part, as individual issues and not as bonds of a certain house issuing them. Both of the companies which you mention are reliable. If you decide to purchase other than real estate mortgage bonds, you could probably arrange to have your local bank buy securities for you.

Q. Will you kindly explain the following: If a bond is called before maturity how is the holder to know? Yet if a bond is not handed in the holder thereof loses money as he continues to hold the bond. At the next coupon clipping time he will be told that interest is no longer paid, as bonds were called. Of course, I know they advertise it in the paper, but in case one has moved to Canada or some other country, are there any books at the banks that can be looked at from time to time to ascertain which bonds are being called?

A. There is no absolute way for you to know when a bond is called other than to read the notice of call in the paper of publication. If your bond is paid direct by the trustee, you will probably be notified at the time of payment of the coupon. However, in depositing a coupon in your bank for collection it often happens that the notice that a bond has been called does not reach the holder. There seems to be no way of overcoming this situation except that one who has callable bonds can appreciate that it is wise to follow the daily papers to know the position of his securities. We know of no way in which you can discover when a bond has been called except by this means. It is unsatisfactory, but at most one can not lose more than a half year's interest, for upon presentation of the next coupon after a bond has been called word of its call will be received with the returned coupon.

Q. I own 100 shares of Willys-Overland common that average me about thirty-two dollars. I have felt that they would stage a comeback and am writing you to find out what you think about their standing and if it is advisable to buy more of the stock at present market to average down.

A. Willys-Overland can not be classed as other than a highly speculative security. An attempt at averaging in a security of this kind always involves a danger of greater loss than has already been suffered in the depreciation of the shares. Having no definite knowledge of your financial position, we can not tell whether you should sell your present holdings and buy good investment securities or whether you should continue to hold the stock in anticipation of ultimate recovery. In no case, however, should there be an attempt to average.

Q. Will you kindly give me information concerning the following investments: Wickwire-Spencer Steel Company 7s, British 5½s, 1929, British 5½s, 1937, French 8s, Danish 8s, Ohio Public Service 7½s. Are there any of these which you would advise me to exchange for others? In addition, I would like a list of bonds in $100 and $500 denominations for further investment.

A. The British Government bonds are undoubtedly the best in the list which you submit. The Kingdom of Denmark 8s are also a good investment. With relation to the French bonds, there is, of course, the political situation to be figured upon. On the whole, however, there seems to be no reason for great worry as to the stability of France, even though her financial position is not by any means as strong as it was before the war. The Ohio Public Service Corporation 7½s contain an element of business risk, but are a good investment, and it may also be said that the Wickwire-Spencer Steel 7½s contain an element of business risk.

[Continued on page 122]

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Financial Questions and Answers

[Continued from page 121]

If you should decide to change the Wickwire-Spencer 7½s, you might transfer into a railroad bond of high investment standing. For example, New York Central 3½s. Or buy Northwestern Bell Telephone 7s, 1941, which are selling at or near 107. Some of the better grade bonds to be purchased in small denominations are: Great Northern 7s, 1936; New York Central Convertible 6s, 1935; or the Refunding 5s, 2013; Northern Pacific 6s, 2047; American Telephone & Telegraph Collateral 5s; New England Telephone 5s, 1952; New York Telephone 6s, 1941; American Smelting 5s, 1947; Bethlehem Steel Refunding 5s, 1942.

Q. I have been working a number of years and make it a practice to save a part of my salary for investment. I now have on hand about $750 and wish a reasonable amount of safety, together with as large a return as I can get. I cannot afford to lose the money. My employer has suggested that I buy one five-hundred-dollar bond and three shares of Louisville & Nashville at about 88. He thinks the bond should be one of the following: Illinois Bell Telephone 5 per cent; First and Refunding Mortgage, 1956; Ohio Public Service First and Refunding Mortgage 6 per cent, 1953; Pennsylvania-Ohio Electric Company First Mortgage and Collateral 6½s, 1938. Please tell me what you think of these bonds.

A. The advice of your employer is certainly sound. The acquisition of Louisville & Nashville stock would tend to increase your yield on the gross investment. All three of the bonds which you mention are of high standing.

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White Slippers

[Continued from page 91]

started up in fright at the apparition of the madman or drunkard—they knew not which. One woman ran shrieking from the death chamber. The rest followed, clinging to each other in terror.

But the English lad lay there unheeding, motionless as one dead, and beside him on the floor lay the little white slippers, with their jeweled buckles flashing in the candle-light.

There was a soft touch on his shoulder, but he did not stir. A hand was laid on his head.

"Let me alone!" he groaned. "She is dead. I do not want to live."

But his cheek was touched by a caress as gentle as the falling petals of a rose, and when he looked up, startled at the kiss, he gazed into the eyes of Alice. His princess. Pale, haggard, half-starved, but the lady of his dreams.

In a daze he arose, and, holding her by the shoulders, looked into her eyes, trying to convince himself that it was true.

"And so you *did* come back!" she said. "When the month was up—and I counted every hour of it—I thought you would never come back. I thought—God forgive me—I thought you were like the rest."

For answer, he dropped to the floor at her feet and covered them with kisses. Then, as she stooped to caress his head, he fumbled for the white slippers beside him, and reverently placed them on her slender feet.

"My queen!" he whispered.

There was a roar of angry voices outside the windows. Alice started, like one who has known terror too well.

"Quick, quick! We must leave the house!" she exclaimed. The furious outburst without was already nearer. "Hurry, you are in danger!" she urged. "Listen, they say you have insulted the corpse of Dona Pilar. Come quickly!"

She dragged the boy to his feet, and the pair stumbled into the corridor, just as the mob of angry women, ruffians and harbor riffraff flooded the narrow passage. Devotees, fanatics and thieves, they were led by two calculating men who knew what they were after; the tall Venezuelan and Durand, the card player. Both carried long knives, held point upward in sinewy hands accustomed to their use.

"*Bon jour*, little pigeon, you are snared at last," laughed Durand.

The Venezuelan said nothing, but grunted as he made a lunge at the Englishman. The point slashed through the sleeve of the sailor's left arm, thrown up to guard his face. A spurt of blood showed that it had been a good blow.

But the Englishman felt a knife hilt thrust into his right hand, and the next instant had returned the blow with a fury that terrified his assailant and laid open his cheek. With Alice close behind him, shielded by his body, the boy fought his way the length of the corridor amid an uproar of shrieking women and shouting, cursing, snarling cutthroats. The dense crowd that prevented effective blows and the flickering of two candle flames that threw confusing shadows over the mob were all that saved the lovers from being cut to pieces. But they were bruised, and bleeding from slashes,

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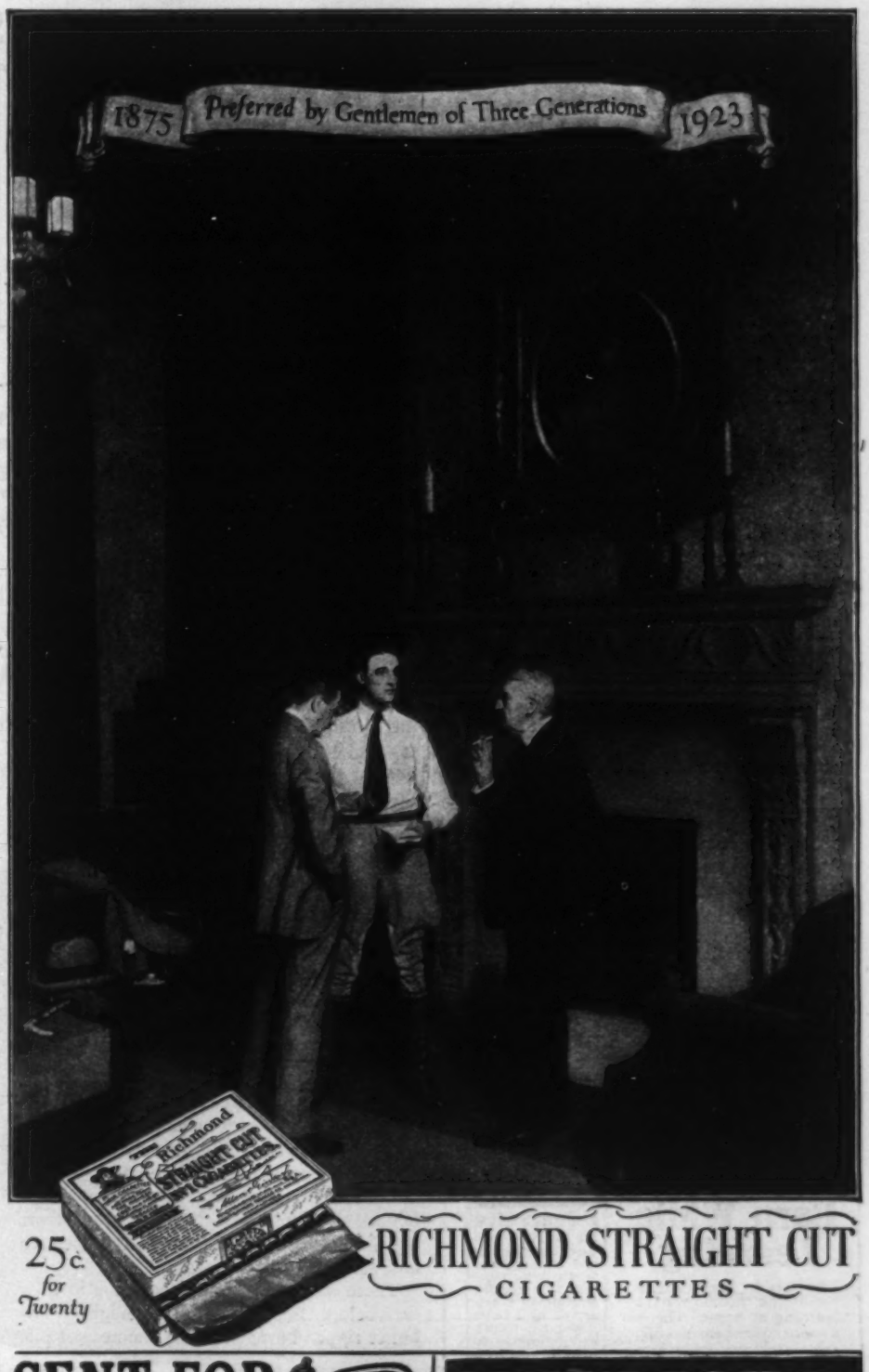

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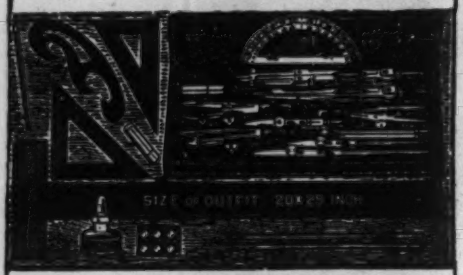

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White Slippers

[Continued from page 123]

as they stood facing death at the end of the corridor.

"My little doves, you will not give us the slip a second time!" murmured the suave voice of Durand, who was edging closer with his glittering knife.

Suddenly there was the shrill scream:

"Look out! The police are here!"

In the confusion of men trying to break their way out and others scrambling forward, the onlookers, who held the candles above the milling herd, blew them out quickly. It was time to seek cover of darkness. There were few in that stifling corridor who did not dread the police—those arrogant dogs with their ready sabers!

But at the moment that the lights went out the sailor felt the door at his back gently open. Alice pulled him with her to the staircase leading to the water, and thrust the door shut behind them.

"Hold back the crowd, while I get the skiff loose and the oars in," she whispered, and was down the stairs like a flying spirit.

The Englishman braced himself against the flimsy door, listening feverishly for the girl's call. He could barely hear the sound of the oars going into the rowlocks, for against the panels that he leaned his weight upon, blows were volleyed—and maledictions. Their ruse had been discovered. The sailor felt the door slowly giving on its hinges. With a final effort he leaped back and vaulted over the handrail to the staircase. As he dropped in the darkness down the well that plunged him into the water, he could hear the door give way with a crash. The besiegers were flung pell-mell upon the steps.

Then he heard no more. He was submerged in the black water, struggling with bursting lungs to kick back to the surface. At last! He drew in the air with a long gasp, and in another instant he had clambered into the skiff and was pulling fiercely at the oars while Alice steered the little boat toward the harbor. There lay the sun-flooded water beyond the shadows of the pier and out there lay the schooner, and beyond it the open sea and the way to happiness.

There was but one shot that rang in their ears before they reached the sunlight. The bullet ripped barnacles from the nearest pile and flickered over the surface of the water. There was a jumble of imprecations from the float where the pursuers watched the cursed foreigner escape with the gold that was as good as theirs. But suddenly it was all blotted out. As they came into the sunlight the darkness closed over all that was behind them.

It was only when the breathless lovers clambered up the rope ladder of the schooner that the girl noticed her loss.

"Bad luck!" she cried. "I've dropped a slipper."

The peddler had finished his cigarette and his story, and Gaspar had finished my boots. To the cobbler I gave silver, but the bearded patriarch received no more than a second cigarette and a smile, that he rightly judged expressed incredulity.

"You do not believe it?" he demanded, with some heat.

"I should like to believe it," I replied. "Heaven knows this gray world needs touches of the scarlet and gold of Romance."

"Gaspar!" shouted the peddler. "He does not believe me. Say, is it all true, Gaspar?"

"*Si.*"

"Show him the proof," the peddler entreated. "Show him what Durand gave you, after he had played cards with the long Venezuelan that same night."

The cobbler rummaged on a dusty shelf among the litter of decades and brought out a package wrapped in newspaper. It was yellow and brittle—no wonder! The date of the paper was about fifty years back. Gaspar spread out the wrapping and showed me the contents: a single tiny slipper, ivory in tone and marvelously patched and repaired. The lining was delicately pieced out with finest silk, and over the instep clung loose threads that showed where a buckle had been attached.

"You see?" said the peddler. "There *was* a diamond buckle, as I told you."

But I had found two little marks on the ivory-colored surface that were fairer stuff of romance than any diamonds: a brownish stain that *may* have been blood; a water stain that *may* have been a tear. And I wondered in what peaceful English home the mate of that forlorn slipper was treasured in a chest with antique silks and lavender.

Gallegher's Devil

[Continued from page 66]

And it's no fault of yours he ain't married me this day, ye soft-hearted babe! Get out of me sight, you and your divil together—get out!"

Poor Cap'n Vesty got out of the kitchen, all wondering, and came into the lobby where Sevinsky was toasting his shins over the new fire. He stood there with oaths dropping off his tongue, while the hardwood cruiser stared at him in astonishment.

"Soft-hearted, because I treat a man square!" said Cap'n Vesty, with another oath. "I've shipped in packets and iron boats and I've been around the Horn eight times, and I've bullied the hardest crews and the toughest mates ever came out o' Paradise Street or the Mission—and by this and by that, what else am I good for? Not a danged thing! Ashore, it's a fool I am. Unless I have the salt in my face I'm a poor helpless babe. Sevinsky, were ye ever a fool?"

Sevinsky looked up with a solemn nod, for he was no laughing man.

"Many's the time," said he, "many's the time, cap'n! And the worst blamed fool of all was when I monkeyed with the womenfolks. That's why I'm here on Beaver, where the wife can't come after me."

"Let's the two of us go and see is there a drop o' brandy left," said Cap'n Vesty, and Sevinsky got up out of his chair, and they went down the corridor together.

THE day before the big wind, Father John went to the head of the island to visit with Neil Gallegher, who was dying that day, so that he did not get his mail. And that night the first gale started in from

the west, switching around to the northwest before dawn, and when day came the big wind was starting in, and it was good for three days anyhow. On the Saturday morning an Arnold Line barge put into the harbor for shelter, with word that the channel was lifting itself in a way that would sink an ocean liner, and worse coming if the wind did not shift. But the wind held steady, and toward noon came word by the under-water telephone from Charlevoix that the mail boat would not put out into the teeth of it, for the boat was cranky and could not face forty mile of that gale. And no fish came in that day except a few perch, since nobody could pull nets with the sea that was running outside the harbor.

It was not until late Saturday night that Neil Gallegher died, which meant that he'd be waked on the Monday night, the weather being cool enough for him to keep that long. Father John stayed the night at the farm, and did not come back except in time for early mass Sunday morning, and the wind still howling out of the nor'west like thirty devils.

Cap'n Vesty came to the preaching service, though Kitty was not with him and there were many who did not come, for the wind was bitter cold and few were ready to face it. After church Father John came out, and instead of stopping to chat with this one and that one, he took Cap'n Vesty by the arm.

"I've a word for you," said he, and by his manner he meant business.

So he did, indeed, for he took Cap'n Vesty into his house and set him down before the fire, and pulled up a chair for himself and took some letters from the table. Cap'n Vesty sat staring at him, for never had he seen the priest so serious and angry-looking.

"KEEP your mouth shut till I'm done," said Father John, with a snap of his teeth. "I wrote to New York about that building of yours, and the answer came yesterday, praise be! The picture that Cap'n Connie showed you was that of a fine building, and the name of it is the Woolworth Building; but that's not the one you bought. You paid your money for an old loft in a far side street that's falling down and worth nothing at all, and brings in no rent, and only the land it stands on has the value of a cent. There's nothing to be done about it. It was Cap'n Connie and not the lawyer who showed you the picture, and it was the lawyer and not Cap'n Connie who bought the property for you. None the less, it was a trick and a man's dirty game to cheat you, and that man was Cap'n Connie. Here's the letter that tells about it, and there's nothing to do but grin and bear it."

The red face of Cap'n Vesty was red no longer, but a queer whitish color. He read the letter word by word and saw for himself that Father John had spoken the truth. Then he looked up at the priest and just nodded, for his teeth were set hard, and there was a hurt look in his blue eyes.

"The man is a rogue and a rascal," said the Father. "He's imposed on you from the start. He's robbed you of the big lump, and has thieved all you had here on the island. I hear tell that he sends his money to no bank, but keeps it all in a belt. That's the way of scoundrels, who never know when they must run. Have ye waked up, Vesty? Can ye see now how the sly devil has been workin' you all this while, and you trusting him?"

[Continued on page 126]

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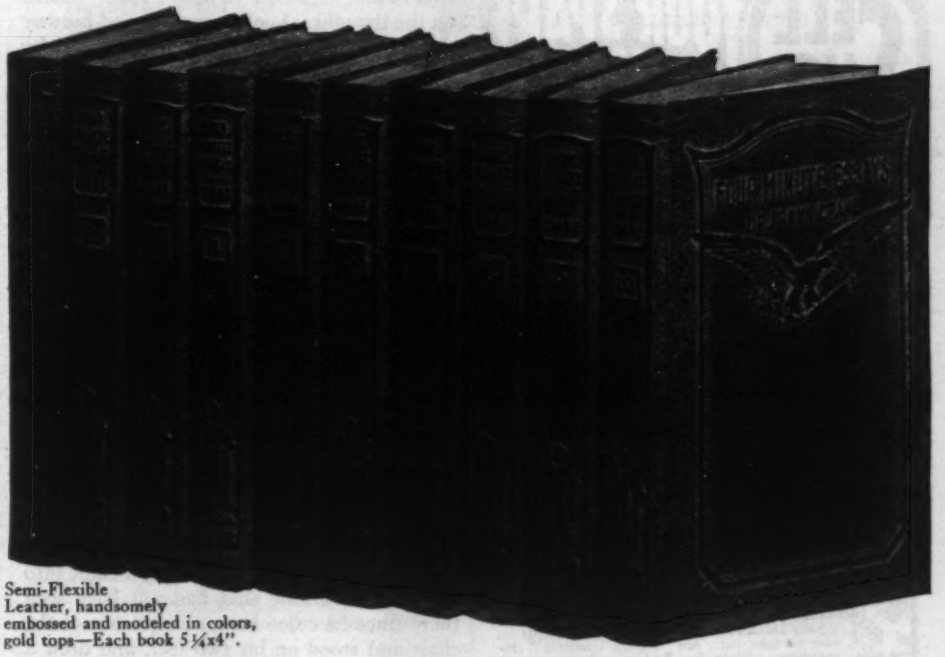

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Gallegher's Devil

[Continued from page 125]

Cap'n Vesty nodded again. Terrible to see was the change in his face, for age had come upon him in these few minutes, and his skin sagged, and the life was fled from his eye.

"I've feared it," he said in a dead voice. "Yet I felt sorry for him, and him such a feeble little old felly——"

"Feeble, is it? He's no more feeble than you are," said the Father, with scorn. "He's a wiry, stout little divil, that's what he is! But he's hooked ye——"

Cap'n Vesty turned a queer look on him.

"But since that night he fell on the dance floor he's not been the same man, and all my fault, it was! He's coughed o' nights, and——"

"Workin' on your sympathies!" spat out Father John angrily. "Now, Vesty, ye can do nought by the law. I'm givin' no advice, but if I was in your shoes I'd make the lad settle up or lose his health sudden. And 'twould not take much to have him run off of the island——"

Cap'n Vesty held up his hand. His face was sorrowful, but there was something strong and fine about it that made the priest look twice at him.

"No, no, Father," said he. "I've been a fool. The man has played me false, and there's no doubt of it; but should I take me fists to him because I've been a fool? Shame on the thought. Look at me, big and brawny as I am, and him a little wizened-up felly wid a limp and a cough o' nights! No, it won't do. I'll take what I've earned, and say no more."

Father John looked hard at him, and shifted about in his chair, but could not find an answer to that word. So he reached over to the table and took another letter from it.

"My heart's sore for ye, Vesty," he said slowly. "But what about Kitty Dunlevy?"

Cap'n Vesty lifted his head. "What d'ye mean by that, now?"

"Hasn't the man asked her to marry him?"

"So I've heard," said Cap'n Vesty, a mortal queer light in his eye.

"But here's a letter from his lawful wife that he left in New York," said the priest. "I had her found. She's in Charlevoix this minute, for she was to reach there Saturday night, and she'll be over with the mail boat."

Cap'n Vesty opened his mouth, then shut it quick and hard. Something new came into his face, something that had not been seen there since he came home; he got out of the chair and stood on his two feet, and drew a breath that heaved out his chest like a bellows.

"I'll be goin' now, Father," said he, and reached out for his hat.

Father John jumped up and laid a hand on the arm of Cap'n Vesty.

"Don't kill him, me lad!" said he. "Remember the woman's comin' for him——"

"Kill him, is it?" Cap'n Vesty's blue eyes narrowed into an icy flame. "By heaven, I'll gut him like ye would a whitefish—but not in the way ye'd think for. Let me by!"

He put the Father out of his way with one hand, and walked from the house.

THERE was a large few in the hotel lobby that morning. Cap'n Connie was there, though not welcome, but he had come to get his dinner. The lighthouse man was there, telling of the wild storm out beyond the harbor and how the rollers were thundering away toward the mainland under the gray wrack of sky. Every lake boat has one or more Beaver lads aboard, and some had come ashore from the boats in the harbor; and old Cap'n O'Grady was over from Garden Island with his two strapping boys. Kitty Dunlevy had just come in to ask them about how they wanted the turkey for dinner, when into the lobby walked Cap'n Vesty.

One and all turned to stare at him. He had walked from the church, and his shirt was open at the neck, and somehow it seemed that all the stoop had gone out of his back; but it was the flash in his eye that made them stare, and the vibrant ring to his voice.

"O'Grady!" He hurled the word out so it deafened them. "Is that your boat at the dock? I want to go to the mainland. What'll ye hire her for?"

OLD Cap'n O'Grady grinned in his red whiskers.

"Ye can have her for nothin'," he said, "because ye'll find no man fool enough to run ye to the mainland in this weather! Is it drunk ye are, Vesty?"

"You're on," said Cap'n Vesty, and ran his eye over the staring men. "Drunk I am not, but I'm goin' to the mainland. Who'll run the engine for a fifty-dollar note, whilst I take the wheel?"

More than one thought him drunk, and not a lad rose out of his chair, for it was only a crazy man would try to run to the mainland in that sea, especially in a gas boat. But then Sevinsky came out of his room and asked what it was about, and they told him.

"I'll go," said he, "for the brandy's all gone and I know where to get more on the other side the water, and I need the fifty."

"Then get to the boat and stow your jaw," said Cap'n Vesty. "I'll be down wid the passenger in no time. See that the tank's full."

"Glory be!" piped up Cap'n Connie, with a cackle and a grin. "And where's the fifty to come from? And who's the passenger?"

"It's you that's the answer to both questions," said Cap'n Vesty, and took a step toward him, with such a blazing fury in his eyes that one or two fell out of his way in a hurry. "You, ye blasted packet rat! What d'ye mean proposin' marriage to Kitty, yonder, knowin' all the while you had a lawful wife in New York City? Eh?"

There was a dead and terrible silence as the meaning of his words sunk into every soul there, and Cap'n Connie no less than the others. He came to his feet, in the corner, his face like a sheet.

"She—she—how come ye to know——" he stammered, and was done for after that minute.

"She's waitin' in Charlevoix for ye now," said Cap'n Vesty. "I know at last how ye've cheated me out o' me money and tricked me and played me for a fool, you and your lawyer friend in New York! But I'll lay no finger on ye, unless ye make me do so. You're goin' to Charlevoix this minute, willy-nilly, ye danged Port Mahon sojer! And you'll pay the fifty to the engineer, and you'd pay for the boat only I've got the loan of it free. Come, now, or I'll take ye by the neck!"

There was no coming about Cap'n Connie, however. He backed into the corner.

"It's a lie from start to finish!" he sung

out, the lip drawing back from his teeth. "I've no wife, and I've not cheated——"

Cap'n Vesty walked in on him.

"Must I force ye?" said he, then swung a look at the others, who were moving closer. "Belay!" he said in a cold voice. "Keep out, or I'll do murder on ye! Leave us be!"

Then Cap'n Vesty had proof what a fool he had been, for without warning Cap'n Connie let fly with a one-two that sent him staggering. There was a world of strength in the little devil, and so surprised was Cap'n Vesty that in two seconds he was catching at the air and grunting as the blows drove in. He took a fist on the jaw that would have killed any but a Beaver Gallegher, and went down, and Cap'n Connie slammed the boots to him, while chairs crashed and Kitty Dunlevy shrieked for help.

Then Cap'n Vesty got to his feet, and the two of them mixed it, and in another minute it was all over, for Cap'n Vesty got home with his boot and laid the rascal out. He leaned over, picked up the senseless Cap'n Connie by the collar, and stood there looking around.

"We're off," he said, and wiped the blood from his mouth.

"Don't be a fool!" spoke up the staring lighthouse keeper. "A boat can't swim yonder, and if it could ye'd never make Charlevoix, wid the waves pilin' up on the jetties."

"Speak for yourself and foller your own trade," said Cap'n Vesty, "and leave mine to me. If any one interferes, look out! Kitty, stop the hollerin' and wait till I come back."

So he walked out of the place, dragging Cap'n Connie after him by the collar. Down across the sand he went to the dock where O'Grady's boat lay, and threw Cap'n Connie into the house like a sack of meal, and climbed after him. Two minutes later the boat started out.

It was Sevinsky who told afterward of the crossing. Sevinsky was a fine engineer, no better on the lakes, but if he had not held the last of the brandy under his skin he would not have gone out that day, for it was wild doings.

With everything lashed down tight, Cap'n Vesty stood up forward at the wheel, while Sevinsky stood over the engine. She was a good boat, but once out of the harbor she began to get the roll, and then Cap'n Vesty headed her straight before the seas to Charlevoix. For a while all was easy, since Hog Island reef and Skillagalee bumped off the worst of the combers, and after a bit Cap'n Vesty turned his head, and asked:

"How's the passenger?"

"Sound asleep," said Sevinsky.

Cap'n Vesty began to sing. A wailing song it was and new to Sevinsky, with a jerk to the words as the boat rose to a sea, and no tune at all.

"Oh, whisky is the life of man,
Oh, whisky, oh, Johnny!
Oh, whisky is the life of man,
Whisky for the Johnnies!
I'll drink whisky when I can,
Whisky, my Johnny!
Whisky put me in the calaboose——"

That was how it started, at least, though Sevinsky said there was more of it that brought a blush to his cheek. And in the middle, Cap'n Vesty broke off.

"Choke her down!" he shouted. "There's hell ahead and we're goin' to catch it comin'!"

Pretty soon it began to get bad, and then it got worse, and kept on getting worse all the time, with the seas rolling up behind and

[Continued on page 128]

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Gallegher's Devil

[Continued from page 127]

the gas boat climbing on them, and then the water going out with a hiss and a roar. There was enough cross-current in the channel to make the boat roll badly, and with every sea Cap'n Vesty had to hold her down hard as she rose up, and then ease off as she tore away with the foam. It was work and no mistake. What made it bad was that the stern wind blew all the exhaust fumes down around Cap'n Vesty as he stood at the forward end of the house, and nigh choked him at times.

They were maybe an hour out when Cap'n Connie woke up. He clawed himself to his feet and glared around, and by the murder in his eye Sevinsky reached for a spanner to tap him one, but just then—*roar!* A whale of a sea climbed up over the stern and burst in the after doors of the house, and it was only by mercy that the boat was not foundered.

"Close them doors, ye swabs!" yelled Cap'n Vesty, his voice reaching back above the whine of the wind. "Jump to it, both of ye! Get a bar nailed acrost 'em——"

Sevinsky managed it somehow and made the doors safe, thanking his stars that the engine had not stopped; but Cap'n Connie's nerve was broken in that moment when it seemed that they were gone. He let out a yelp, and then came forward screaming, until Cap'n Vesty half turned to him.

"Ye blasted farmer, I'll show ye who's a seaman!" said Cap'n Vesty, and gave him the boot. Cap'n Connie went down under it, and lay all crouched up after that, with only a whimper out of him now and then. Once in a while Cap'n Vesty would look back at him and laugh, and Sevinsky said it was a laugh that chilled the blood.

Another hour of it, and the seas getting worse all the while, until a thundering big one came bursting aboard and smashed in the doors, bar and all, and sent Cap'n Connie climbing for the roof with a yell in his throat, and Sevinsky was knocked headfirst into the engine. Whether him or the water did it, the engine stopped.

Cap'n Vesty brought down his helm hard and let her come around into the trough. Then he jumped for Cap'n Connie and fetched him a blow that drove him to one side, and caught Sevinsky up and threw water in his face. There was water enough and to spare, and after a minute Sevinsky opened his eyes, with the boat rolling gunnels under.

"LET her roll," said Cap'n Vesty, with a laugh. "She'll not sink that way. It's the twist of a sea tumbling her over the crest that may send her under! Get to them engines, for the worst is ahead of us. Hey, ye sojerin' rogue!" He kicked Cap'n Connie in the ribs. "Up and bale or I'll throw ye out! And leave them starn doors open so's the gas will blow out."

Cap'n Connie baled, and Sevinsky worked over the engine while the boat rolled, and presently the engine started up and they were off again. Sevinsky was sober by this time, and doing some hard praying to the saints, but Cap'n Vesty began his singing once more as he swung the wheel up and down.

Two hours more, and darkness was gathering, when they came staggering toward the Charlevoix breakwater, half full of water and the pumps choked and Cap'n Connie baling for dear life. Here the water was high and the seas thundering in from the length of the lake, and what with the water and the narrow space between the two jetties, none but a fool tries to make Charlevoix with a heavy sea from up the channel. The coastguards were watching, and people on the hill above, and all the backyards along the breakwater were full of crowds gathering to see the shipwreck.

Cap'n Vesty stood to the helm with a wild laugh and a lilt of song on his lip, and the bright blue eyes of him watching the swirl of white water off the jetties. Now they were up and down again, and then up on a big roller that had come clear from Wisconsin—and driving at it, live or die! A yell went up from the crowds, and another yell, and then the boat staggered and lurched as she scraped the edge of the north jetty and was flung into the channel beyond.

"Collect your fifty off of him, Sevinsky," said Cap'n Vesty, stirring Cap'n Connie with his foot. "And do it quick, for there's a lady waitin' to collect more nor that!"

Sevinsky collected, and Cap'n Connie only let out a whimper as he paid over the money.

IT was five days before Cap'n Vesty came home with Sevinsky and the boat, for in Charlevoix it was found that he had three ribs broken, where Cap'n Connie had slammed the boots to him, and a bit of fever came on him from that cause. But come back he did, and a thankful man was old Cap'n O'Grady to see the boat come home safe again.

Father John was among the first down to the dock, and as soon as possible he took Cap'n Vesty by the arm and led him to one side, into Willy John's net shed, and gave him a bit of a squeeze.

"Ye old rascal!" said he, with a grin. "It's glad I am to see ye safe again, Vesty. What did ye do with him, eh?"

Vesty laughed. "Father, I gave him to his missus," said he, "and a masterful creature she is! I wish you might ha' seen her. She give him a black eye the first ten minutes she had him back."

"But did ye get no money back from him?" asked Father John.

"O' course not," said Vesty, and then looked out the door. "Glory be, if there ain't Kitty——"

"Hold on a minute," said the priest, gripping him back.

Kitty Dunlevy had heard of the boat coming in, and was heading for the dock, with her hair flying in the wind and her eyes like stars. They could hear her voice asking for Cap'n Vesty as she went by.

"I've news for ye," said Father John. "The man I wrote to about your building in New York City sent me another letter. There's people want to buy it, and bad, to build a big warehouse on the site. They offer ye twelve thousand for it, and that's a fortune here, and ye can get back the farm, not to mention the hotel and all——"

Cap'n Vesty looked at the Father with a twinkle in his blue eyes.

"I'm obliged to ye," he said, "and now, if you're all done, I'll go meet Kitty."

"Heaven help ye!" said Father John, letting loose of him. "Go!"

And Cap'n Vesty went, with a laugh on his lips.

Science Discovers the Secret of Caruso's Marvelous Voice

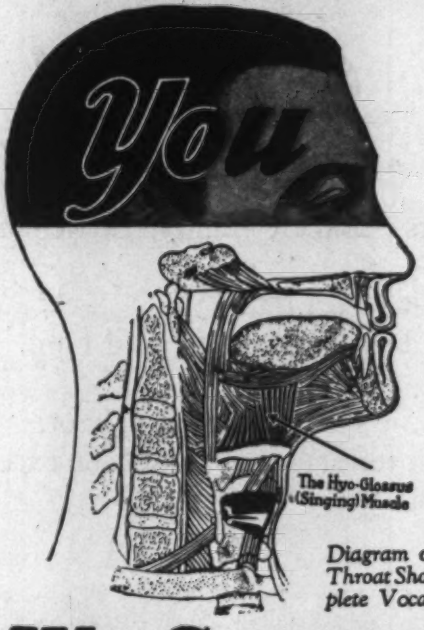

Diagram of the Normal Throat Showing the Complete Vocal Mechanism.

Caruso's Throat and Yours

Why is it that the humble peasant boy of Italy became the greatest singer of all time? This diagram of his throat will show you. Caruso's marvelous voice was due to a superb development of his Hyo-Glossus muscle. Your Hyo-Glossus muscle can be developed too! A good voice can be made better — a weak voice become strong — a lost voice restored — stammering and stuttering cured. Science will help you.

Diagram of Caruso's Throat Showing the Superb Development of his Hyo-Glossus Muscle.

We Guarantee— Your Voice Can Be Improved 100%

EVERY normal human being has a Hyo-Glossus muscle in his or her throat. A few very fortunate persons — like the late Caruso — are born with the ability to sing well. But even they must develop their natural gifts. Caruso had to work many years developing that muscle before his voice was perfect.

Whether your voice is strong or weak, pleasant or unpleasant, melodious or harsh, depends upon the development of your Hyo-Glossus muscle. You can have a beautiful singing or speaking voice if that muscle is developed by *correct* training.

Prof. Feuchtinger's Great Discovery

Professor Feuchtinger, A. M.— descendant of a long line of musicians —famous in the music centers of Europe, Munich, Dresden, Berlin, Bayreuth, Vienna, Paris and Florence, for his success in training famous Opera Singers—discovered the secret of the Hyo-Glossus muscle. Dissatisfied with the methods used by the maestros of the Continent who went on year after year blindly following obsolete methods, Professor Feuchtinger devoted years of his life to scientific research. His reward was the discovery of the Hyo-Glossus, the "Singing Muscle".

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If you want to improve your speaking voice—if you stammer or stutter —Professor Feuchtinger will help you.

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